

A STEPDAUGHTER
OF ISRAEL

ROBERT BOGGS

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BY

ROBERT BOGGS.



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A STEP-DAUGHTER OF ISRAEL.

PROLOGUE.

The wind swept howling along the desolate coast, hurling the raging water in white-crested masses on the long stretch of sandy beach and driving the hissing spume up to the very feet of the noble army of pines—sturdy giants, centuries old—that stood in close array on a gentle slope skirting the margin of the sound. They who had stood their ground in many a former fray shook their plumed heads and swung their great arms defiantly, seeming to rejoice in the fury of the conflict. A few dead and half-dead trees in the main body went down, and here and there some grand monarch of the woods, occupying an advanced post nearer the water's edge, swayed to and fro like a drunkard and fell, to be seized by the tumultuous billows, tossed exultantly amid the shouting, clamorous voices of the tempest and borne away, mutilated and shorn of the glory of its majesty.

Soaring aloft, these huge coniferæ spread their wire-like plumes to *Æolus*, who played upon them as upon a great harp, adding a sad, dirge-like monody to the raving and roaring of the elements.

A mile inland, the furious swoop of the wind, the rush and lash of the waves, the never-ceasing, monotonous sighing and sobbing of the pines came as a murmur from afar. There in the depths of the forest, where the sombre shadows lay, all was still and peaceful, and a soft southing among the close-locked limbs overhead was all that told of any unusual disturbance among the powers of earth and air. The denizens of the forest had fled to these inner solitudes—the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and man—man in his savage state, a little higher than the beast, his cohabitant of the wilderness.

* * * * *

The storm had subsided. The wind had spent its strength, and now sighed and panted like a weary giant. The waters were almost still, with a lazy, upheaving movement lapping the beach and making a soft, complaining murmur, as though craving forgiveness of the beautiful earth for the riotous excesses into which they had been led by their turbulent comrade.

The moon in her last quarter—a golden bow that sent a long shaft of light like a shining arrow across the sound—had not long risen. It was close upon the dawning of day. On a sandy spit which stretched far out into the water appeared a dark moving mass, from which arose a wild, wailing sound—an Ossian-like chant, such as men unacquainted with the art of harmony but with a knowledge of numbers might sing.

Like the shadow of a cloud the dark mass moved on, the wild dirge rising with increasing volume as it advanced to the extreme point of the spit. It stayed not at the water's edge, but floated on until gradually it disappeared, melting away, as the cloud-shadow would melt, the sad song dying on the cool night air in a feeble, faltering strain.

* * * * *

As the sun arose and stretched his warm arms out to embrace the blushing earth, a solitary Indian approached the seashore. Gliding stealthily from tree to tree, crawling on his belly like a serpent under the thick growth of palmettos, now and then pausing to peer cautiously about and listen, he advanced until he could see the gleam of water through the ribbon-like fronds. Stopping here he listened intently.

The shrieks of the sea-gulls, as they dipped in the waves and circled around each other, and the polyglot melody of a mocking bird, dancing airily on the leafless branch of a storm-racked oak, were the only sounds he heard, and pushing on to the very verge of the bank he parted the fronds with his hands and looked along the shore. Not a human being was to be seen. Then he stood boldly upon his feet. A stately deer walked with slow, majestic tread to the water's edge and sniffed the salty breeze before wetting his lips, but the Indian heeded it not. He was in search of other quarry, and his fierce glance

changed to one of surprise as he scanned the surrounding scene in every direction. Had he been less intent on distant objects he would have seen, in the shadow of a clump of palmettos close at hand, two bright, black eyes watching him with the timorous look of a hunted wild beast.

The Indian now ventured down on the open, sandy beach and walked along it. Presently he came to a place where the smoothness of the sand was disturbed by innumerable tracks—the footprints of men, women and children. The footprints came down from the woods above. He turned and followed them back to their starting point—cautiously, suspiciously, for the North American Indian is ever watchful, giving his enemy credit for possessing equal cunning with himself.

In a little while he came to a deserted camp, and looked at it with all the astonishment one of his race ever allows himself to show. Everything was intact, those who had left it not having thought it worth while to destroy their worldly goods. Then he turned and retraced his steps to the beach, following the tracks in the other direction until he came to the point of the low, sandy spit. There he saw that the tracks led out into the water, and waded out a little way himself. He could see the footprints still, through the clear shallow water, and, having satisfied himself that they continued outward, returned

to the shore and ran to the woods, into which he disappeared.

An hour later the warrior reappeared, accompanied by other warriors and some squaws. The latter scattered about the deserted camp while the former followed the footprints as the first man had done, standing a long time on the point of the spit, looking seaward and talking to each other, then pursuing the trend of the beach further on, examining the ground as they went.

The women were busily engaged looking over the plunder that had thus unexpectedly fallen to them when they were startled by a sharp cry coming from the borders of the forest, some little distance away. Immediately some of them hastened in that direction and presently came upon a young girl ensconced among the gnarled limbs of a low-growing live-oak. She soon explained that in searching about among the palmettos—for what she did not say—she had suddenly come face to face with some kind of fierce beast.

“It is there!” she said; “there!” pointing to a thick clump of the little dwarf palms.

One of the older women, knowing that no very dangerous creature could be hidden in such a place, ventured to go in and see what kind of beast it was. First, peeping through the interstices of the fronds, she saw a pair of bright eyes; then, clearing away the space in front of her, she looked closer, and, turning to her companions,

pointed with a gesture of scorn to the maiden in the tree.

“What is it? What is it?” was the general cry, and, thrusting her hand into the hiding place, she drew forth a reluctant and frightened little savage maid of four or five summers.

This is the tale that is told, even to this day, of a tribe of savages who, hard-pressed and driven to desperation by their enemies, sought death in the deep sea.

CHAPTER I.

THE OLD WORLD.

Seville, the beautiful, half-Moorish, half-Gothic city, was decked in gala array.

The king, Philip the Second of Castile and Aragon, had at last decided to visit this, the sunny capital of the south, and her citizens, merchants who had grown rich on the trade of the Orient and the Occident, expended of their great wealth without stint to give him a reception worthy the great nation that he ruled. Since the discovery of America, more than half a century before, wealth had flowed into Spain in an uninterrupted stream, and Seville had got her full share of it; her merchants' houses were palaces, her public squares gardens, and her name was the synonym of beauty throughout the length and breadth of Europe; yet Philip, who had been seated on the throne some years, had never visited her. Perhaps it was that very sunny loveliness for which she was celebrated that repulsed this gloomy ascetic; the dismal grandeur of the Alcazar, overlooking the barren wastes around Madrid, suited him better, and there he stayed when he was not in the Netherlands superin-

tending—from a safe distance—the slaughter of rebellious Dutchmen.

But now he was coming, and all the streets through which he and his cortege of gallant knights and grandes of Spain would pass were decorated with banners, bannerets and gonfalons, and rich tapestries hung from windows and balconies, where all the beauty of the city was assembled, amid a profusion of flowers, anxiously awaiting his arrival.

At last he came, welcomed by the huzzas of the people, whom he despised, and the booming of cannon, of which he was afraid. Preceded by a Pursuivant in the royal livery—who was followed at a little distance by a gallant troop of knights—he came, mounted on an ambling jennet—the war horse was not to his liking—caparisoned in a housing of cloth of gold, with bridle of velvet, bit of silver and saddle inlaid with precious stones.

Surrounded by the mighty men of his realm, all viewing with him in the splendor of their adorning and the adornings of their stately steeds, he came, and, heedless of the smiles of beauty or the plaudits of chivalry, passed on to the church to pray, thence to the bull-fight and the *auto do fe*.

With so many people collected along the royal route, the balance of the city appeared to be left to take care of itself. Scarce a human being was to be seen in the streets, while the caravels,

xebecs and feluccas lying at the quays, although decked with flags and pennants, were deserted by their crews.

Out of one of the narrower streets debouching on the quay, when the excitement and enthusiasm in the city were at their height, came a girl, perhaps fifteen years of age. She was dressed in a black velvet bodice and short crimson silk skirt, with a sort of snood of the same color and material on her head—not having yet reached the age when it was deemed decorous for her to wear the lace mantilla with which it was customary for Spanish ladies to half hide their beauties. She was accompanied by a dog—a spaniel—which she held in check with a silken cord. It was a pretty creature, as was its mistress whose girlish loveliness promised to develop into a higher order of beauty in the future.

“Come, Carlos,” she said, “since we may not go to see the king because of the great throng that surrounds His Majesty, we must e’en content us with a look at the ships decked in all their bright flags—and a gallant show they make, too, *señor*.”

While thus talking to the dog she stooped and loosed the cord from its collar.

Finding itself at liberty, the little animal immediately began to gambol about its mistress, yelping and barking for joy, she encouraging it by holding out her hand, to make it leap high in

its efforts to lick it—the dog's way of kissing those it loves.

Laughing and enjoying the sport, the girl did not heed that she was approaching the edge of the quay on which they were, and she might have fallen into the water had not the dog, as heedless as herself, itself fallen in with a great splash.

"O, Carlos!" cried she, looking down at him, "what hast thou done, foolish dog?"

He had fallen in a sort of dock that opened into the river—there was no vessel of any kind in it at the time—and had he swam out into the stream, would soon have found some place where he could have made a landing, but he did not do this; he essayed rather to get a foothold on the wall of the dock and climb out, and the maiden, kneeling down, tried to assist him. But the wall of the quay was too high and, in his frantic efforts to get at the loving hand extended to him, he soon began to show signs of exhaustion. Seeing this, the girl became frightened.

"O, my dog! my dog!" she cried, the tears welling into her eyes, "thou wilt drown. Holy Mother, what shall I do?" looking around in hopes of seeing some one whom she could call to her assistance.

But there was nobody near and, tearing the silken snood from her head, she held that down to the dog, who, with the instinct of self-preservation, seized it with his teeth. She did not en-

deavor to lift him out of the water, feeling herself unequal to the task and fearing to lose this frail hold on his life, but keeping a firm grasp on her end of the bit of cloth, encouraged him to do likewise, looking round every now and then with a feeble cry for help.

The two had not been in this trying position long when a little boat shot into the dock from the river, and the next instant her dear friend and loving companion whom she had so nearly lost was lifted out of the water and laid at her feet.

So great was her astonishment and joy at first that she did not notice how this had happened, but, taking the wet dog in her arms, covered it with caresses and kisses, while lavishing on it the most endearing terms; but then, the creature struggling to get away, so that it might shake itself—for a dog that has been in the water is never content until it has done that—she recollected herself and, looking up, beheld standing beside her a handsome young cavalier.

This cavalier was altogether unlike the typical Spaniard. He was a tall, well-formed, broad-shouldered young fellow, evidently strong and active, like most of the youths of the better class of that day—the warlike exercises then deemed necessary to the molding of a gentleman developing very stalwart men—but his complexion was fair, his eyes, though dark, not that intense black peculiar to the eyes of the Spanish race;

and the girl saw, when he lifted his broad-brimmed, plumed hat for an instant, that his hair, which lay in soft, short curls on his head, was red, looking like rings of gold when the sun touched it.

“Ah, your señoria,” she said, the warm blood flushing through the soft, creamy skin of her cheeks as she rose to her feet, “I owe you thanks for saving my poor dog, and I was so foolishly glad to have him once more in my arms that I didn’t even look to see to whom I was debtor. I crave your pardon, señor.”

“I am glad to have been of service to you, señorita, to you and your little dog,” said the cavalier, “and there is no great debt to be considered.”

“What your señoria is pleased to say only proves that you understand not the value of the service you have done me,” replied the girl. “Carlos is my only friend, and had I lost him I know not what I should have done. Truly, methinks, I should have leaped into the water with him had you not come when you did.”

The young man looked at her seriously a moment; then he said, “Surely, life cannot be so barren to you already that you would sacrifice it for the sake of a dog!”

“Nay, señor,” was the reply, “life is not barren; it hath its pleasures, even for me, but I love my dog.”

“Even for you?” he repeated, with an amused

smile. "Hath not life the same pleasures for you that it hath for other maidens of your degree?"

She did not reply, but stood looking on the ground, and he continued, "Now, I pray you, tell me, maiden, why you are here alone to-day, when all Seville hath gone to welcome the King?"

"But nay, señor, I am not alone, as your own eyes may see. There is Carlos—dear Carlos. But where is he?" looking about anxiously "Ah! there he is," as the dog came galloping to her, barking and showing other signs of impatience; "he is tired of waiting for me. Be quiet, Carlos! Lie down, sirrah!"

The animal obediently crouched at her feet, whining, and evidently anxious to be gone.

"A dog is but a poor companion at the best," said the cavalier.

"Ah, think you so, señor? But you scarcely know Carlos, and so I must e'en excuse your poor opinion of him. Indeed, your señorita, he is my only friend, as I have already told you."

"Then must I crave his pardon, and yours, likewise, señorita," was the response. "An' that be so, which I doubt not, having the assurance from yourself, you do well to hold him dear, for truly friends be hard to find."

"Hath your señorita found that out, too?" asked the girl, who, now observing his apparel more particularly, perceived that it was made of the plainest and cheapest materials then in use, judged that he was by no means rich.

"I am but a soldier of fortune," he said, "though of right good Castilian blood, and such are not blessed with many friends."

"A soldier!" cried the girl, her beautiful eyes brightening, "but I might have known that: all brave cavaliers are soldiers now. But why should not a soldier of fortune have friends, señor?"

"Truly, I know not, unless it be that we are for the most part poor, and each bent on winning his own way to fame and fortune.

"We have *buenas camaradas*, yet that signifieth not always true friends. But I know not why I have kept you standing here, señorita, so I will bid you adios; the little dog, I am sure, will be glad when he sees the last of me."

"Then will he be ungrateful," said the dog's mistress, "and thou art not ungrateful, art thou, Carlos?"

The dog acknowledged the notice bestowed upon him with a wag of his tail.

The cavalier had drawn his boat up by the rope which he held in his hand, and the girl, with a soft "Adios, señor," turned to go away. She had gone but a little way when she came running back.

"O, señor," she said, in a breathless, hesitating way, "should—a—should you need money—my grandfather, I doubt not, will gladly lend you some. He hath dealings with many cavaliers."

"But he scarcely hath dealings with them who can give him no pledge for that which they borrow of him," replied the cavalier, laughing. "Thanks, señorita, for your kind intent, but no man, I warrant, would willingly cast his money into the sea, unless he be mad, and, of a surety, I'll not be the one to ask your good grandfather to do it."

"But he'll require no pledge of you, señor, when he knoweth how I am indebted to you."

"You are indebted to me naught, señorita, and, even were it so, the more reason that I should ask naught of him. But you can scarce understand the drift of my thoughts."

"Ah, but I do," said the girl. "Your señoría is too proud to take by way of a loan that which you fear you may not be able to repay."

"Perchance that is it," said the young man. "But still I thank you, señorita, for the kindness you intend," and, taking the girl's soft, white hand in his, he raised it to his lips; then, bidding her adois, leapt into his boat.

This act of simple courtesy, so common in those days, seemed to have a strange effect in this case. The girl, with heightened color, stood a few moments where the cavalier left her, as immobile as a statue, her eyes downcast, and the hand his lips had touched folded closely in the other. When she looked up he was far out in

the stream, making his little boat spin under the quick, strong strokes of his oars, and, with a scarcely audible sigh, she turned away, softly kissing the hand he had kissed as she walked homeward, followed, unwillingly, by her dog.

CHAPTER II.

THE NEW WORLD.

We of the present nineteenth century, who have become accustomed to things marvelous, almost miraculous, can hardly form a just idea of the effect produced throughout the length and breadth of Europe when the news was slowly filtered through its commercial arteries, that a new world, inhabited by people of a race hitherto unknown, had been discovered by a Genoese sailor. That this man—this crank, as he was considered—though then they had not the word—by all save a few, like Perez and Quintanilla, had exploded the time-honored notion that the earth was flat like a great pancake, and had set at rest forever the much-argued question whether or no a ship could sail very far in a westerly direction on the bosom of the Atlantic without coming to grief.

Soon, other adventurers following the path marked out on a pathless ocean by Colombo, the dove that went forth from the ark of the old world and returned with evidences of the existence of dry land beyond the watery waste, found their way to the new countries in search of El Dorados and fountains of perpetual youth,

returning, some with fabulous wealth, others with fabulous tales, which latter, being judiciously handled, proved of quite as much value as the cargoes of gold and silver.

About three years after the visit of Philip II. to Seville, a galleon of the first class sailed from Cadiz and set her course for the Western World. She had about one hundred and fifty men on board, chiefly soldiers, and was commanded by Don Rudolfo de la Borla.

During the voyage to Hispaniola nothing unusual happened, but shortly after the galleon left that island, Don Rudolfo died, and the command devolved upon one Carlo Rossi, an Italian, who had the reputation of being a good soldier, and a soldier was generally chosen as chief of such expeditions, the navigation of the vessel being entrusted to an experienced mariner.

They were in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico when this sad event occurred, and shortly after the body of the commander was consigned to the restless waves, a storm arose that drove them to the northward. Three days they were buffeted about, and, at the end of that time, the wind still blowing a pretty stiff gale, found themselves in close proximity to some low-lying islands. The sea was running high, the galleon leaking badly, and their only chance of escape from death lay in driving her through the pass between two of these islands, and finding shelter under their lee. This the pilot with considerable

difficulty succeeded in doing, when they found themselves in comparatively smooth water, where they lay to and looked into the condition of their craft. It was very evident that she could not be kept afloat much longer, and, the pilot advising it, she was run across the narrow strip of water in which they then were, to the mainland, two or three leagues away.

Here she was beached, and with the only boat left—the others had been lost during the storm—the soldiers and sailors were transported to the shore, where they made an easy landing, the beach being smooth and free from rocks or anything else to give them trouble. Of the one hundred and fifty men who had sailed from Cadiz twenty-six had perished, including two subordinate officers, and Carlo Rossi found himself the sole one in authority over a band of rough, hardened adventurers, already disposed to be jealous because of his Italian nationality, forgetting that the man who had opened this new field of enterprise to them and their like was himself an Italian.

The shore of the lake or sound into which they had brought their vessel was bordered by a thick growth of trees—chiefly pines—among which they caught an occasional glimpse of the wild-eyed natives peering at them curiously while the royal standard of Castile and Aragon was being unfurled to the breeze of a new world, the soldiers grouped around it lifting their

gleaming swords and taking possession in the name of his catholic Majesty.

The natives were doubtless greatly impressed by the ceremony, which to them probably had some mystic significance, but had they understood the real meaning of it, and all of which it was the forerunner, they would have fallen upon these strangers then, while they were, in a measure, defenceless, and exterminated them.

As it was, they were shy, though not afraid, and it was some time before they could be induced to come near enough to hold any intercourse with them.

The first thing the white men did was to establish a temporary camp in the forest near where they had landed, and get ashore what they could from the galleon. The wind had laid and the tide had ebbed, leaving the vessel in water not more than three feet deep, so that it would have been an easy matter to have transported the entire cargo to the land had it been desired; but provisions and ammunition for their arquebuses was what they chiefly needed, and these were at once secured. This done, they began to look about them.

At first they had thought of repairing their vessel and getting her afloat again, but the impossibility of doing this soon became apparent. When they had brought her into the position in which she now was, the water, driven in by the wind, had been unusually high, and now it was

found that she was stuck fast in the sand, and it would be impossible to move her; so, necessity compelling, they e'en made the best they could of the matter, and, having selected a place suitable for a permanent camp, proceeded to strip 'her of sails, rigging and such provisions as were not spoiled, besides bringing away two small cannon, called falconets, with a sufficient supply of powder and ball, and abandoned her to her fate, which was settled by the next storm breaking her up and scattering her timbers for miles along the shore.

With regard to the future and what it might have in store for them, they never once gave it a thought, not doubting that in time some ship bent on a voyage of discovery would come that way, or that whenever they felt so inclined they could march around by the coast line in an easterly direction until they came to a Spanish settlement. For the present they were only intent on enjoying the freedom of life ashore after their long confinement in the galleon and the rough treatment they had received from Boreas and Oceanus.

After a little while the natives became more bold, and a few of the women ventured into the camp, when, being well received and presented with some trifling trinkets, they returned to their people with marvelous accounts of the goodness of the strangers, which induced others to come, and soon the intercourse between the white men

and the savages was unreserved and free from fear or suspicion—at least on the part of the latter, who brought offerings of maize and game to the guests, whom they seemed delighted to honor.

The place the Spaniards had selected for their encampment was a point of land or cape that at its base was not more than three hundred yards across, which, in case of any interruption to their friendly relations with the Indians, would be easily defended.

The eastern side of the cape was washed by what they at first supposed to be the waters of an estuary of the sound, but which they afterward discovered to be one of the mouths of a river, the bank of which a little higher up was covered with a dense growth of trees—live-oaks, gums, magnolias, bays and many other varieties, the drooping branches of the live-oaks almost touching the stream, the grey moss which hung pendent from them, like the beards of river gods, being constantly swept one way or the other by the tides as they ebbed or flowed.

Over these trees clambered vines, which, it being the season of spring, were gorgeous with blossoms; the wistaria, hanging heavily with purple clusters, like a grape vine overladen with fruit; the yellow jasmine, loading low trees and shrubs with heaps of gold, and the trumpet-vine, climbing high to flash its flaming banners in the sunshine.

On the cape itself there was very little growth of any kind—a cluster of stunted, storm-torn live-oaks, one giant pine and a few clumps of palmettoes—that was all.

Two or three parties, under the guidance of natives, started out to explore the country and find out its resources, and while they were gone those who remained behind employed themselves building huts to shelter them from the weather, a dozen or more men under the direction of Rossi erecting a log house of two rooms, one of which was to be the commander's sleeping apartment, and the other a store room in which their provisions and ammunition were to be kept.

The exploring parties returned, bringing no very encouraging reports. One party that had gone up the river in the boat told a tale of dismal swamps where ferocious beasts prowled at night, their frightful cries mingling with the bellowings of crocodiles of enormous size that swarmed in the river. The others had traversed miles and miles of pine lands, abounding in game and watered by clear, running streams, alive with fish, but possessing no attractions for civilized men.

However, for the present they were well satisfied, and set themselves to enjoy to the full those hours of idleness so dear to the soldier of that day, who, accustomed to rough campaigning and hard knocks when in active service, gave

himself up to riotous living or worse in times of peace. But there was no opportunity for riot or license here in the wilderness, and these men amused themselves with the innocent pastimes of hunting and fishing, the worst they were guilty of being gambling and making rude love to the women.

All discipline had disappeared since the wreck of the galleon, and Rossi began to seriously consider how he could re-establish his authority, which seemed to be set at naught by these turbulent spirits. He was too good a soldier not to know that such a state of affairs as then existed could not continue without danger. Something might occur to excite the hostility of the natives, but it appeared much more probable that dissension would arise among the men themselves, which would be far worse.

He tried by mild remonstrance and good advice to bring them to a sense of their duty, but they only laughed and treated him with contempt, which he dared not, standing alone as he did, resent.

There was one among them—Pablo Gonzales by name—an old campaigner, gigantic of stature and grim of aspect—who was treated by his comrades with that respect which is born of fear. This man had been a free companion from his youth, and had served under the most noted leaders of his day. He was one of the most brutal of a brutal trade, boasting of the bloody

deeds that had stained every step of a long career with truculent pride. He had lost all taste for everything save rapine and slaughter, and stood aloof, regarding the others as a giant might a company of pygmies.

Rossi invited Gonzales to his quarters and, taking him into his confidence, asked his advice.

The man had been accustomed to subordination all his life, and cared not whether his captain was Spanish, Italian, Frenchman or Moor, so long as he was a good soldier, and a good soldier he knew Carlo Rossi to be.

"Had I your authority, señor," he said, "I'd soon bring these fellows to their senses, e'en wer't needful to hang a score of them."

"It hath occurred to me," replied the Italian, after a few minutes' consideration, "that there should be some officer subordinate to me—one with whom I could hold counsel, and on whom I could depend in an emergency, and if thou, Pablo, art content to serve as my lieutenant—I have authority to appoint thee to the office—so might we, acting in concert, bring about the needful reforms. What say'st thou?"

"As you will, señor," replied the soldier. "It were hard to say you nay, perceiving, as I do, that you stand in need of a strong hand to aid you, but were we otherwise circumstanced, I would scarce accept the responsibility."

Accordingly, the newly-appointed lieutenant, secretly exultant at his first promotion, went

among the men as one in authority, and soon brought some sort of order out of the chaos that prevailed. Strict military discipline was not at once established, it is true, but the disorder that had reigned disappeared, and the regular routine of camp life was gradually resumed.

CHAPTER III.

THE OLD WORLD.

When the Jews, during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, were given the option of embracing Christianity or quitting Spain, many of them, preferring poverty to apostasy, went forth to seek homes in other lands. Among them was one Beneberak, who carried with him his son, a mere babe—the child being all that was left to him of kindred. He went to the African coast with many others of his race, like them fell among thieves there, and, after enduring many hardships, was glad to return to Seville, where he had formerly lived, and submit himself to be baptized at the hands of the zealous ministers of Holy Church, who, honestly rejoicing in the salvation of two more souls—for the child was baptized at the same time with the father—knew not that the Jew, still obstinately clinging to the faith of his fathers, secretly cursed them and their Christ. But so it was, and he brought up his son to love the ancient religion of the Hebrews and hate that of the people among whom he lived, while at the same time cautioning him to be wary, and not allow the priests,

ever on the watch for recusants, to find aught on which to base an accusation against him. In the course of time old Beneberak died, ministered to by those very priests whom he consigned to the bottomless pit with his last breath, though keeping up an appearance of Christian resignation for the sake of Beneberak the younger, who, having sufficiently established his house, took unto himself a wife, who bore unto him also a son—one, and no more.

This Beneberak—he was known as Beneberak among his own people, though he had been christened Basilio Murillo—tried to instil into his boy the hatred of Christianity that he had inherited from his own father. The mother, however, was not only a Christian in form but in fact, and her child grew to love her religion, which he saw was, in its essence, a religion of love, and not of hate, and ere she died, which she did when he was a youth of sixteen, promised her to live and die a faithful follower of Christ.

When the first Beneberak returned to Spain after his rough experience in Africa, he was almost penniless; but Seville was at that time one of the most important commercial cities in the south of Europe, and where trade flourishes the descendants of the astute Jacob generally manage to secure to themselves a fair share of the profits arising therefrom; so it was not very long ere he was again in comfortable circumstances, and before he died had accumulated

quite a respectable fortune, which his heir, by judicious management, doubled and trebled.

No one knew positively the amount of Basilio Murillo's wealth—he kept his own counsel, and lived modestly, fearing the envy and covetousness of his Christian neighbors, which he had always believed had had more to do with the persecution and spoliation of his race in the preceding generation than any mere question of religious belief. Yet enough was known of his successful business transactions to satisfy those who interested themselves in the matter that he was far from being a poor man, and when his son Alfonso offered his hand in marriage to a daughter of a Castilian family, poor but proud, that had moved to Seville in hopes of bettering its fortunes, her kindred made no objections to the alliance.

The only one who did object was the father of the young man. He had other views for his son; but, finding him possessed of a share of that Hebrew obstinacy which he, the old man, was wont to consider a virtue to be proud of, he let him have his own way. So Alfonso wedded the woman he loved, and carried her home to his father's house. But the days of his happiness were of short duration, the young wife only living long enough to give birth to one child, a girl, who was soon left both fatherless and motherless, the husband dying in less than a year after his bereavement.

The child, left to the care of servants, was but little noticed by its grandfather at first, but when one of those Castilian relations, whom he despised for their pride and poverty, which he considered an incongruous association, came and offered to take it and bring it up in his own family, he seemed to manifest a sudden interest, rejecting the proffer of the Spaniard with a greater show of contempt than was necessary, and in a little while after he once began to make much of it, the little one wound itself so closely about his heart that he would rather have parted with all his wealth than with it.

Beneberak, as we will call him, in preference to the name that had been forced upon him by his sponsors, inhabited a modest but commodious dwelling in a part of Seville where many of his brethren—"the *reconciled*" they were called—lived.

Those who had business with the old Jew, believing him to be rich, gave him credit for great parsimony, because of the extreme plainness of the furniture in that part of the house occupied by himself and his clerk; but had they penetrated further they would have found themselves surrounded by a sort of oriental luxury, for on those inner chambers inhabited by his granddaughter—now a maiden of about eighteen years—no expense was spared to render them attractive and comfortable—or what was so understood in those days.

In one of those inner chambers now sat Beneberak and Antonia, the maiden in question. The old man was reading. Sitting in a straight-backed chair, whose cunningly carved top towered above his partially bald head, he leaned forward on his cane for support, his chin, covered with a stiff, grizzly beard, resting on his chest, while he held his book—a curiously bound volume that a bibliomaniac of the present day would pay a small fortune for—at arms' length. No one could have mistaken the race from which he had sprung. The sharp black eyes, large hooked nose, and heavy, but obstinate mouth proclaimed him a son of Israel.

The girl sat at the low window idling. She was the same who between three and four years before had stood on the quay gazing after the cavalier who had saved her dog's life, as he floated away on the bosom of the river—out of her sight—out of her life. She had grown into a tall, well-developed maiden, and as she sat there with her elbow resting on the window-sill, the back of her beautiful hand just touching her soft cheek, dreamily looking out into the patio or courtyard belonging to the house, she was the picture of feminine loveliness in repose. Rising to her feet, to watch the light play of a butterfly fluttering among the flowers with which she had adorned the place, she stood with the stately grace of the Venus of Milo, her round, full neck supporting a magnificent head crowned

with a mass of black hair, which she usually wore combed high, so that it added to the natural grandeur of her appearance, for she was a grand-looking woman. The smooth forehead looked like cream-tinted marble in contrast with the black hair and brows, beneath which appeared a pair of marvelous eyes—large and dark—from which the soul of the woman seemed to look with earnest, tender watchfulness. The face was a fine oval with the delicate crimson tint of health in the cheeks and the round, dimpled chin, the nose slightly aquiline—neither so small as to be weak, nor so large as to be masculine or coarse—and the full lips were curling and sensitive, prone to tremble a little when the sympathies were touched, or any unusual emotion was stirred. Those features of Antonia which I have thus lightly touched upon were nearly perfect, in form as well as in their power of expression, but none was so perfect as her ear. Antonia's ear was not particularly small, but, like her elegantly formed hands and feet, was well proportioned in size to the rest of her superb person. The lines were exceedingly fine. There were no sharp angles where curves should be, no curiously shaped holes full of black shadows where there ought to be only indentations, with transparent half-shades and reflections; but all those delicate little parts which go to the making of an ear were symmetrically arranged, running into and intersecting each other with sweep-

ing lines, lights, half-shadows and reflections, full of grace, marvelous to behold, and subtile gradations of tint, from the warm, creamy white of the arch to the soft rose-pink of the lobe.

“Grandfather,” said the maiden, as she sat down again, “do you remember nigh four years agone I came home, wet and bedraggled, my silken kirtle spoiled, and told you how poor Carlos had been near drowning, and that he had surely done so had not a handsome young cavalier come in a little boat, in the nick o’ time, to save him?”

The dog was lying at his mistress’ feet, and at the sound of the beloved voice looked up in her face, beating the floor with his tail.

“Ay,” replied the old man, closing his book, “I am not so old that my memory doth fail me, but I had thought thou had’st forgot the circumstance and that same cavalier, too, ere now, as was befitting thou should’st.”

“Forgotten him?” said Antonia, the crimson in her cheeks deepening. “Is’t like that I should forget him, when ’tis to him I owe the life of my only friend? He was a well-favored young cavalier of good degree, and there was e’en that about him one does not easily forget.”

“Thou wert but a child then, Antonia, and ’tis not well that cavaliers of high or low degree should stick i’ thy silly pate, so I would advise thee to forget him now.”

“And wherefore should I forget him? Must

I be ungrateful to one who did me a service because he chanced to be a youth of goodly means?"

"Nay, girl, 'tis not of gratitude nor ingratitude, I speak," said Beneberak. "The service for which thou claim'st to be his debtor was of the slightest, and I doubt not he hath forgotten it and thee."

"That well may be," replied the girl, quietly, turning her face toward the patio.

"And besides," continued the old man, "thou art now a woman grown, and thou should'st lay aside childish recollections. Aye, wench, thou hast sprouted up so quickly and so finely, withal, that I scarce know when thou did'st pass the bounds of childhood."

"And when we pass those bounds do we leave all remembrance of the past behind us? Ah, no, dear grandfather, we cannot if we would. You, yourself, have not done it, for oft have you told me of days of tribulation, when you wandered in the African desert with your father; hungry and athirst, with naught but savage beasts and more savage men lying in wait for you."

"Aye, truly, wench, 'tis as thou say'st, but those were times to leave a mark upon the soul that a thousand years would ne'er wipe out—God's curse upon the uncircumsized dogs that drove His people forth to perish in the wilderness!" he muttered under his breath.

After some moments' silence Antonia returned

to the subject that evidently engrossed her thoughts.

"The cavalier," she said, "is again in Seville."

"How know'st thou that he hath been away from Seville?" asked Beneberak, suspiciously.

"Of a verity, I cannot say I do know it," was the reply, "but 'twould seem reasonable had he been in the city that I should have encountered him before."

"Thou would'st have encountered him before?" repeated the old man. "Am I to understand then that thou hast encountered him recently?"

"I saw him yester morn—I'm sure 'twas the same cavalier—and think not he is a whit the richer, if one may judge of the weight of the purse by the quality of the apparel."

"And what importeth it to thee whether he be rich or poor?"

"He was kind to me and my poor Carlos, who would have been drowned but for his timely aid, and I would gladly know that he hath fared well i' the world."

"And did this señor caballero accost thee?"

"Nay. 'Tis like, as you say, he hath forgotten me. Had he seen Carlos perchance he had remembered him."

The last clause of the maiden's speech, though following the first naturally enough, betrayed the wish that was father to the thought, and Beneberak was too shrewd not to perceive it.

"Then 'tis as well he saw him not," he said. "I tell thee, these cavaliers are all cut after the same pattern," he added warmly, "they be hawks, girl! hawks! whose talons rend the hearts of doves like thee."

"An' this be not an honest cavalier, then will I ne'er trust mine eyes again," said Antonia.

"Tut, tut, what have thine eyes to do with the matter? Think'st thou, foolish wench, that they can spy out a rogue?"

"Mine eyes tell me when I look into other eyes if they be those of a true man."

"Vaya! what call hath a maid like thee to be looking into men's eyes? I fear me thou hast been over bold. Be more circumspect with thine own eyes, or chance they will lead thee into mischief."

"You do me wrong, grandfather," said the girl reproachfully. "There be none who can justly say that I e'er did aught unmaidenly; but when we hold discourse with others 'tis but natural to look into their eyes, and I trust not them who do otherwise."

"Trust none," said the old man; "for, I tell thee, the veriest gallows-rogue that lives can assume the look of honesty—aye! and be to the seeming more frank and true than the honest man himself. Heed thou the counsel of an old man who hath read the book of life in many languages, who knoweth the world as he knoweth Seville—its broadest streets and its narrowest

alleys, its bright plazas and its dark corners. Guard well thy heart; for, let a man be ne'er so honest in the ordinary affairs of life, he's not to be trusted where thy sex is concerned; no—never!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE NEW WORLD.

From among the savage women who constantly hung about the Spanish camp many of the soldiers chose wives whom they wedded in the manner prescribed by savage usage, and lived within separate huts, enjoying a primitive kind of domestic felicity. There was one whom Rossi himself had solicited to enter into the con-nubial state, but who had refused to do so and, when the Italian had become pressing in his suit, she had fled to the forest, returning to the camp no more.

Nawatonah was the adopted daughter of an old chief, and had been promised by him to a young warrior of merit. She was not of the same tribe as her companions, but the sole survivor of a race that had perished—a savage waif that had escaped the doom of her people. Being quick of apprehension, she had picked up enough of the stranger's language to act as interpreter between them and the duller aborigines and, possessing a wild beauty and grace peculiarly attractive, had won the regard of the commander of the post.

Now Nawatonah was not in love with the young barbarian who had been selected for her future lord, but she had been assigned to him, by a power whose authority she never dreamed of disputing, as a piece of property which he would be entitled to claim as soon as he had performed certain stipulated things—conditions of the marriage contract. Indeed, it is to be doubted that the savage—pure and simple—ever experiences the high order of chaste sentiment we call love. The male savage is always regarded by the female as a being infinitely superior to herself, inspiring admiration, reverence or fear, and, vice versa, the male looks upon the female as a creature created to be his slave, his drudge—nothing more.

Civilized men and women love each other, and that sentiment places them on a level—it uplifts the weaker and lowers the stronger until they stand on a plane of equality. They become one. The relative positions of the savage man and woman are those of master and slave, and they remain unchanged through all conditions of life. There is no spiritual affinity to make them one, as in the other case. Yet, curious it is to draw a parallel between civilization and savagery until the extremes of both conditions of life meet on a common ground—the ground matrimonial. We find among people who have reached a certain degree of refinement in civilization that exactly the same ideas with regard

to matrimonial alliances prevail as among savages. The feelings of those most interested are not taken into account at all; the contract is made by higher powers, whose simple wish is acknowledged law, and, as with the savage, it is a question of scalps, peltries, or ponies, with his civilized prototype it is an affair of houses and lands, bank-stocks and bonds.

The Italian was greatly chagrined at the result of his courtship, and the men, who were far from according him that respect to which he was entitled as their commander, never failing to make his unsuccessful wooing the turning point of a joke when occasion offered, ended, by thus applying the keen whip of sarcasm, in lashing him into a fury, when he swore he would have the woman, if he had to take her by force.

Learning from one of the other women that there was a certain spot near the river's bank where Nawatonah often spent whole days alone, he proposed to Gonzales to surprise her there and bring her away to the camp, and Pablo entered the more willingly into the enterprise in that he saw in it the prospect of a rupture with the natives. This fierce, bloodthirsty spirit was getting weary of the peaceful days that came and went without a change.

Two days later the victim of this conspiracy was a prisoner in the little chamber used for a store room, the stores having been removed and

the narrow window secured with stout, oaken bars.

As Gonzales had anticipated, as soon as this outrage became known to the Indians the amicable relations hitherto existing between them and the Spaniards were abruptly brought to an end.

The warriors at once withdrew to the forest, where a grand council of sachems was held. The young man to whom the girl was affianced appeared before them and with thrilling words spoke of the great wrong done him, giving a vivid description of the dastardly manner in which his promised bride had been captured by the white men, and demanding that she be restored to him at once, without delay. Fiery, impatient, fearless, and supported by a band of warriors as young and hot-headed as himself, he would have gone immediately to take a bloody revenge, but the older and wiser chiefs, knowing the Spaniards, with their strange weapons, whose mysterious death-dealing powers they had seen demonstrated on the game in the woods, to be formidable enemies to cope with, counseled patience, and forbade any such undertaking until negotiation had been tried; promising, if that failed to restore the maiden to liberty, then to war against the strangers, and war once inaugurated simply meant extermination to the weaker party in the end, for when the Indian has once dipped the tomahawk in blood

no thought of mercy ever stays his hand. He knows not what mercy is. He may have faith—faith in his gods, in his own cunning, courage and powers of endurance; he may have charity—that charity which bids him feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty. But mercy? never! Mercy is essentially a Christian virtue, and he who hath it not is nearly akin to the savage.

Accordingly an embassy, consisting of several old chiefs, proceeded on the mission, with that solemn gravity supposed to be becoming on all such occasions. Through the medium of one of the women who had learned a little Spanish from her white spouse, the cause of complaint was made known and the release of the woman held in captivity required at the hands of her captors.

Their demand was answered with shouts of laughter and jeers, and they themselves were treated with contumely. The arrogant Spaniards, remebering the prowess of their countrymen in Mexico and Peru, held the natives of all America in great contempt. They had yet to learn the difference between the full-blooded, untamed savage and a race rendered effeminate by a sort of bastard civilization, which, while it destroys man's powers of endurance, does not substitute real courage for natural ferocity.

The embassy, its equanimity undisturbed by the levity of the whites, returned as it had come, and the affair was treated by the rude soldiers

as a matter for jesting. Nevertheless, Pablo Gonzales set them to work at once, and before many hours had passed there was a parallel of earthwork extending from water to water across the peninsula. The workers grumbled at being required to perform such useless labor, as they considered it, but after it was completed and they found that all the women save two had deserted the camp, they began to think it was as well to be prepared for any emergency, and even made no objections when a guard was told off and put on duty with instructions to be watchful against surprise. Nawatonah, shut in her prison, did not know what was going on without, but she doubted not the warriors would soon come to her rescue, and patiently waited, listening for the sound of the war-whoop.

CHAPTER V.

A hut was erected near a little sally-port for the guard, and here the bugler, whose instrument had been heretofore used only for the amusement of his comrades and the savages, took up his quarters, and every morning and evening now the mellow musical notes could be heard calling the garrison to duty or warning it to rest. For several days there were no signs of any hostile movement on the part of the Indians. The only sounds that came from the forest, the borders of which were about one hundred yards distant from the fortifications erected by Gonzales, were the songs of birds in the daytime and the cries of wild beasts or the hooting of the great horned owl at night.

The moon was near the full, and the women said no attack need be looked for until the nights were dark. But in this they were mistaken. That very night one of the sentinels perceived something moving about just outside the earth-works. He thought it was some animal, and would have let it pass unmolested, but for the fact that the men had had no meat for several days, and thinking this a good opportunity to

secure some, fired his arquebuse at the prowler. The effect of his shot was startling. Immediately the space in front of the earthworks became alive with dark forms, brandishing their arms and yelling hideously. It was as if an army of devils had sprung out of the ground. Had the savages charged at once, without hesitation, they would in all probability have gained an entrance into the camp, but for a few moments they stood irresolute, and in those few moments the relief guard had turned out prepared to repel stormers, while the bugle calling to arms, roused all the garrison.

A volley was poured into the now advancing Indians, which caused them to halt again, when a second from those of the soldiers off duty who had arrived on the scene of conflict forced them to return to the shelter of the forest, carrying their dead and wounded with them.

This enterprise had been undertaken by Thiesico, the betrothed of Nawatonah, and the young braves who sympathized with him, without consulting the elders of the tribe, whose policy of delay did not suit his impetuous spirit. He had expected to take the Spaniards by surprise, and had he succeeded the insubordination would have been overlooked—he would have been a hero. As it was, crestfallen, disgraced, he retired from the companionship of his fellows and awaited an opportunity to retrieve his character.

There was little likelihood of the Spaniards being taken by surprise now—the first attempt having proved so very nearly successful had put them more on their guard—but hostilities having been openly begun, the savages gathered along the edge of the forest and filled the air with their arrows, to which the garrison replied with arquebuses, and one of the falconets, which had been placed in an angle of the earthworks so as to command the approach either way, the other having been planted in a little redoubt on the river-bank in charge of a few men posted there to patrol the stream.

At first the Indians were frightened by the loud report of the cannon, which they had never seen fired before; but soon perceiving that the principal harm inflicted by these terrible engines was to the timber, the balls thrown by them tearing through the trees over their heads and only hurting those who remained in the rear, they recovered from the panic that had seized them, and uttering yells of defiance, sent fresh flights of arrows into the camp.

Thus the battle continued several days, with a loss to the Spaniards of one man killed outright and several wounded, more or less seriously, when all demonstrations on the part of the Indians suddenly ceased. It was impossible to tell whether they had withdrawn from the field or not, and a sortie was determined upon to settle the question.

Under the command of Gonzales a party of twenty-five men, fully accoutred for fight, went forth and proceeded toward the forest. They marched quickly, and as they approached the dark line of giant pines held their pieces ready for action; but not an arrow cleft the air, not an Indian was to be seen. The silence of death reigned where the war-whoop had lately resounded; for the birds, those lovers of peace and harmony, that had been wont to fill the woods with music, had fled, affrighted by the hideous sounds of human conflict.

Penetrating the forest a considerable distance without finding a human being, dead or alive, the Spaniards returned to the camp, satisfied that there was no enemy in their immediate vicinity; yet fearing the Indians had only withdrawn for a time to await a favorable opportunity for a renewal of the attack, the vigilance of the garrison was not relaxed, and every man slept on his arms, prepared to hasten to his post at the bugle's call.

In the meantime the lack of meat, and also of bread, began to be seriously felt by the garrison, for with the interruption of their peaceful intercourse with the natives had ceased the supply of maize and game which had been freely furnished by them. There was always an abundance of fish, but the men were tired of such lenten diet, and longed for a change. Their cry was for bread more than meat.

Civilized man suffers more from lack of bread than from lack of any other article of food. The richest viands lose their savor without it, and fish above all things becomes an abomination to his palate. Bread is truly the staff of life to him.

The two women hearing their complaints, showed them how by chopping off the tops of the palmetto stalks a soft substance could be obtained which, dried and pounded into a sort of flour, made into cakes and baked, served as a sort of bread. This substance is the young, tender shoot or bud of this otherwise very tough plant, which is of about the consistency of the Brazil nut, and has, indeed, a very nutty flavor.

With this substitute for bread, and the fish, which were easily captured, there was no danger from actual starvation at any rate, though the viands might pall on the palate.

Nearly two weeks had passed and the savages had made no further demonstrations. It was the dusky hour of twilight. Camp fires were burning brightly, casting flickering, ruddy lights on the hardened faces and gleaming armor of the men gathered around them. At one of these the two women were cooking, and there was a group of about a dozen soldiers lounging.

“Methinks,” said one of the latter, “the savages have had eno’ o’ fighting, and will trouble us no more.”

“Eh, Cornelio,” responded a comrade, “think-est thou so?”

“Ay, truly.”

“And wherefore, amigo?”

“Ah, José mio, thou didst not go into the forest. Hadst thou done so thou’dst have seen what work our bombas made among the trees, and thou’dst have had thy answer without word of mine.”

“Caramba! trees are not men, bobo. Didst see any dead men, prithee?”

“Nay, ’tis not in reason that we should, sith doubtless they were disposed of ere our sally.”

“That may be,” said José, “but I doubt me the living will not be so easily disposed of. They will return anon, and their arrows are not to be despised. I, for one, would we were well away from here.”

“Ay, their arrows make a cruel wound,” said another man, joining in the conversation; “ask my comrade, poor Lorenzo, other: he had one through his thigh, and says he’d rather two bullets any day than one long shaft like that.”

“ ’Tis not so long,” said another, “sith the bow went out of use in Europe, and I believe the English still have their archers. The archery of those island brigands was something to marvel at, they tell me.”

“ ’Tis true,” said José. “I had a comrade once—one of those same Englishmen—and he told me of a fellow who would put you a shaft in the centre of a target and then split that in twain with another.”

"An' I could draw a bow like that," said Cornelio, "I'd e'en throw away mine arquebuse and trust to the long shaft."

"But tell us, José," said one, "how came it about that thou, who so hatest these islanders, should e'er have chosen one of them for thy comrade?"

"Ah," replied José, "thou say'st truly, Alejandro. I hate the islanders with a right honest hatred; and yet, nath'less, I once had such an one for comrade. As thou know'st full well, the free companies serve him readiest whose conscience sitteth lightest in its shell and whose purse strings are ever the loosest. Now the Count Beppo—we ne'er knew him by other name —was a captain o' that mood, and he had them of all nations in his band—English, French, Dutch, Italians, Spaniards—and thou'dst ne'er have known the one had e'er drawn blade 'gainst t'other, such good friends were they, fighting and foraying together, without respect of king or church. But each one of us had his boon companion, and the two went share and share alike, whether of blows or booty, and my comarado was an Englishman, as I have already told thee, and a *buen muchacho* was he, of a verity."

"And what ever became of this same pate-breaker, amigo?"

"He e'en got his own pate cracked in a brawl ere I could come to the rescue, and so there's

not an Englishman alive now that I can otherwise than hate."

While the men continued talking in this vim, a low musical sound, gradually increasing in volume, arose, apparently from the sea.

All heard it, and suddenly became silent, looking at each other inquiringly. The strain was something like that of a solemn hymn. It passed slowly around the camp along the verge of the forest, and returning to the sea, whence it came, died away.

"What is it?" asked Rossi, who was standing a little way from the group.

"Nawatonah," said one of the Indian women in a scared tone—"the song of Nawatonah's people."

The story of Nawatonah was known in the camp, and all understood. Rossi stood a moment listening, as if he would catch the sound again, then went to his quarters. Before entering his own apartment he quietly drew the bolt of the other room and looked in. He could just see, by the starlight, a dark form that, seated on the floor, rocked itself from side to side singing, in a low voice, the same solemn strain he had just heard.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLD WORLD.

In a dingy wine-shop in one of the narrowest thoroughfares of Seville two men sat at a rough deal table drinking. These men belonged to a class very numerous at that time in Europe—unscrupulous knaves, who hired themselves to any master, who, having need for such villains to further his ambitious or nefarious projects, was willing to pay well for their services. We have an identical class of rascals at the present day. They are chiefly employed by politicians for purposes quite as foul as those in which their prototypes were engaged in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

They were dressed in leathern jerkins, over which steel cuirasses were buckled, their breeches were of some thick woolen stuff, and on their feet they wore heavy, cowhide boots, reaching up to the knees; at their sides, the short swords then in vogue among Spanish troops. Their steel head-pieces—casques—lay on the table with a couple of poniards, which they had been using to cut slices from a loaf of coarse bread. In England these men would

"It doth seem to me, friend Tito," said one of the men, "that this is a sort of dog's life we lead here; with naught to do but eat, drink, sleep and draw our pay."

As he ceased speaking he lifted his flagon to his lips, and did not set it down again until it was empty. "By the Holy Mass! but you are well qualified to do the one of these same, of a surety, Captain Jaqueton," replied Tito, laughing.

"As to the matter of wine-bibbing, an' that be what thou meanest, friend Tito," replied the Captain, "I can drink a bout with the next one, be he whom he may; for eating and sleeping—why, they come by nature. We eat to live and sleep to rest, while we drink to be merry. Is't not so, amigo?"

"Troth, and you are right," said Tito, "though, for my part, I cannot find it in the heart of me to be merry in a dungeon hole like this, though I drown myself with drink."

"No, nor I," said Jaqueton. "Give me a nook i' the greenwood, with a score of good fellows and a runlet of wine borrowed from some greasy burgess. Ha! ha!" laughing and slapping his companion on the back, "to drink, to sleep—to wake and drink again, with no roaring lion of an host to call for a reckoning and empty one's pouch when one's belly is full. How doth the picture like thee, comrade?"

"It liketh me full well," replied Tito. "What more could a true man ask?"

"What more, truly, an' a little in the way of love and adventure be added, by way of variety?"

"Ha! love and adventure. Now do you prick my memory, most noble Captain; for I have in charge, at the present speaking, on account of our good lord the count, an affair that smacketh of both, and which hath in it a fair stroke of profit. I can scarce undertake this enterprise alone, and *el señor conde* hath left it to me to choose my own comrade."

"Ha! say'st thou so!" cried Jacqueton, pricking up his ears, and calling lustily for more wine.

"Ay, sooth," replied Tito, "and no better man than yourself, *mi capitano*, know I for the prosecution of such an affair. For your courage, you wear your credentials on your cheek, and I doubt not your discretion."

"Thou say'st well, comrade," replied the other. "These same credentials," touching the scar on his cheek with his finger, "were bestowed upon me by a villain Dutchman, who had a mind to shave me with one stroke of his sword; but I shaved him cleaner than he did me, I promise thee."

"I doubt it not, *señor capitano*."

"As for my discretion—an' there be secrets to be kept nor rack nor thumbscrew will tear them from me. But here's the wine. That villain boy

hath been to Catalonia to fetch it, methinks. Drink deep and stint not, and then will we discuss this same emprise of thine."

Tito was not slow to accept this invitation, and wiping his mouth on the sleeve of his jerkin, proceeded. "A primo, then," he said "you must know that our lord, the count, is in *love*."

"Ha, ha," laughed Jacqueton; "'tis ever so with your noble caballero—at war or in love—to-day fighting, to-morrow billing and cooing. Of a truth, he is never idle—cutting throats or clipping kisses—'tis ever his humor. As the Frenchman hath it, *vive la guerre! Vive l'amour!*"

"I know naught of your Frenchmen," grumbled Tito, who was an Aragonese, and hated the French with a cordial hatred.

"How should'st thou? thou ne'er hast traveled i' the world as I have. Thou wert ne'er i' the Netherlands, where they talk as much French as Dutch. But that's none to thy discredit, comrade. Thou hast fought the Morisco and Moslem Turk, and I doubt not thy good blade hath left its mark among them.

"But thou hast told me naught of the count's affair, nor how I am to employ my discretion and my valor in his service."

"'Twill not take long i' the telling," responded Tito.

"A secondo, you must know there liveth in Seville a Jew——"

"A Jew! By our Lady! there be more than one Jew in Seville, methinks."

"Ay, true enough. But this is a particular Jew."

"Ah! a particular Jew is he?"

"Well, ay—yet not exactly a Jew either. He hath been a Jew once, as were his fathers before him, but now he passeth for a Christian."

"He *passeth* for a Christian. Certes, 'tis well put; for I trust your Christian-Jew no more than your Christian-Turk. It standeth to reason—your Christian-Jew must be an unnatural beast; for, mark thou, amigo, the beast that is neither fish nor flesh, is a foul beast, ha, ha! But I perceive thy drift. This Jew—this Christian-Jew, or Jew-Christian—hath a daughter—a dainty chick—"

"Nay, nay," interrupted Tito, "'tis this way: This Basilio Murillo, this Bemberak, to call him by his name in Jewry, hath a granddaughter, and she hath as fine a presence as any she in Seville."

"Thou hast then seen her, comrade."

"Ay, that have I, as who hath not that is no stranger in this good city?"

"And doth she affect my lord, the count?"

"How mean you?"

"Doth she reciprocate his tendresse?—in short, and in plain speech, does she love him?"

"Not she. She'll none of him nor any other he in Spain. She hath an air that holdeth men

aloof, and not the brassiest man in Seville dare approach her save in a civil way."

"Cuerpo de San Antonio! but this must be a *demoiselle doucette*," cried Jacqueton. "Yet, nath'-less, she's but the granddaughter of a Jew."

"I know not what your *demoiselle doucette* may be, but 'tis certain she's the granddaughter of a Jew."

"Ay, and therefore accessible if approached with proper science of war. Like any other citadel, an' she yield not at discretion to parley, then may she be carried by assault."

"'Tis as you say, noble captain; she is to be carried by assault, for she will listen to no parley."

"Ah!" ejaculated Jacqueton, "then I conceive 'tis to be a case of trappanning the shy bird that will not come to the fowler's call."

"Ay," replied Tito, nodding his head.

"Good. But first—a *primo* as thou say'st—let's look into the matter. Hath this *demoiselle*—this girl, I mean—no kindred save this old Jew?"

"There be kindred, but they dwell not in Seville. Her mother was of Castilian blood, but she did quit this wicked world when this other she came into 't, and her people sometime after went away—moved bag and baggage, goods and gear, but where they went I know not—back to Castile, whence they came, 'tis like."

"It importh not where to they went, so they be not in Seville. Your Castilian is the very

devil to deal with where the honor of one of his blood is concerned. But, marry! what hath the granddaughter of a dog Jew to do with honor? Certes 'tis honor eno' for her to be the object of my lord's desires."

"So say I, *senor capitano*. Honor cometh to such as she through the honorable consideration of such as my lord."

"Of a verity, amigo. But to the point! When and where is this pretty bird to be caught?"

"Beyond the limits of Seville close to the river is a small plantation of larches, ilix and other trees to which doth she oft resort with her dog—"

"Hath she a dog, then?"

"Ay, a little beast of the spaniel breed that followeth at her heels where'er she goes."

"I like not the dog, comrade. I've known a dog to rout a full score of tall fellows who would have stood their ground against double their number of turbaned Turks."

"With stroke of sword we can dispatch the dog, clap mufflers on the pretty mouth ere it can cry out—"

"And then off and away to my lord's castle—eh? Is that the plan of campaign, amigo?"

"Nay, not to his castle, capitano mio, but to a little nest he hath prepared for her."

"Ay, the dove to the dove's nest, where the eagle will visit her. Good. And when is this *comedia d'amor* to be enacted?"

"Come Whitsunday she'll to the shrine of *Nuestra Señora de los barqueros*, by the river, with an offering of flowers—'tis her wont—"

"Ay, 'tis ever the wont of these same Jews, be they he or she Jews, to play the hypocrite, to make proper Christians believe they love the Holy Mother and The Son."

"Be that as it may, 'tis her wont to lay such offerings on that selfsame shrine every feast day an hour or two before set of sun, and thence she goeth into the wood to ramble with her dog; and there we may take her without fear of rescue, for 'tis a place solitary and little frequented in ordinary."

"Be it so, then and to-morrow sennight being Candlemas we have ample time to settle all preliminaries. Now must I be marching, having a trifling love affair of mine own to attend to, and, as thou must know full well, amigo, love and patience abide not together in the breast of woman."

The two worthies quitted the wine-shop together, and as soon as they were gone a young man, accoutered like them in cuirass and casque, and armed with sword and poniard, but evidently belonging to a higher social class than they, made his appearance in a doorway that connected the room in which they had been sitting with one in the rear of it. Passing to the door that opened into the street, he looked after them

as they went swaggering along, jostling such citizens as came in their way.

“A precious pair of knaves, truly,” he muttered. “Brigands, forsooth! Ay, and worse than brigands, sith under the shadow of some greater villain, ye follow the trade with little fear of punishment. I would I had caught the name of the old Jew on whom their discourse turned; in that case a word of warning would have put this thoughtless maiden on her guard; as ‘tis, I must e’en trust to being at hand to render her what assistance I may. ‘Tis fortunate I know the place the villain did designate, and fitting place it is for such an ambuscade—the marvel is that any maid should go there alone.”

CHAPTER VII.

In the afternoon of Whitsunday the cavalier who had overheard the conversation of the men-at-arms in the wine-shop stepped into a little boat and pulled slowly up the Guadalquivir. He knew about where the shrine of *Nuestra Señora de los barqueros* stood, and when he had passed that point turned the boat's bow shoreward and with a few vigorous strokes of his oars sent her in among the thick, overhanging, water-loving shrubs that lined the river's bank, where she lay effectually concealed. Having made her secure by twisting the rope attached to her bow around a stout branch, he clambered up to the road which followed the windings of the stream to Cordova.

Assuring himself that there was no one in sight, he first went to the little wayside shrine.

"She hath not as yet been here," he said, noticing there were no fresh flowers lying at the feet of the rude image of the Virgin.

Then examining his sword and poniard to see that they were in good order, he looked about him thoughtfully, and perceiving a thicket of laurels not very far off, entered it and stretched himself at full length on the ground, where he

lay concealed from the view of any who might chance to pass that way. He had not been ensconced in his hiding place very long when he heard the clatter of horses' hoofs and presently Tito and his friend, Captain Jaqueton, rode by. From where he was stationed the cavalier could see a considerable distance along the road, and watched them until he saw them turn off into the woods. Then he arose from the ground and approached the shrine again, where he stood a little while cogitating and debating with himself as to his next step.

"Now doubtless this foolish damsel will be here anon," he said; "shall I await her coming and warn her of the peril that lies before her, or shall I permit her to go her ways and myself follow her? 'Tis plain she needeth a lesson that will make her more circumspect i' the future; and 'twere well to bestow upon these knaves some chastisement that shall make them afeard to venture on such open villainy again. 'Twill go hard an' I, a Castilian cavalier and knight of Spain, cannot beat two such rascals as these be."

His knightly pride aroused by these thoughts, he returned to his place of concealment, where he awaited with some impatience the coming of the damsel in question. Nearly an hour elapsed and he began to think the two villains lying in ambush in the woods would be disappointed of their prey without his interference, when the joyous barking of a dog attracted his attention,

and directly a spaniel came running past, followed in a little while by a young woman, who walked with the stately grace of a queen.

"By the mass!" murmured the cavalier, as he gazed at her through an opening in the leafy screen that concealed him. "'Tis the maiden I encountered some three years or more agone on the quay. Aye, 'tis surely she, and that's the very dog I saved from drowning."

Just then the maiden called, in a voice rich and sweet, "Carlos, Carlos, come here, señor," and the dog came running back, leaping up to kiss the hand held out to him. "Down, down!" said his mistress, pointing to the ground, when he immediately lay down close to her and remained quiet while she knelt in front of the shrine and said a prayer, after which, rising and making the sign of the cross, she deposited her offering of flowers at the feet of the Virgin.

What would the cavalier have thought had he known that he himself, though his name was unknown to her, was the chief beneficiary of her prayer?—that it had been the practice of this maiden to seek Our Lady of the Boatmen—because she had last seen *him* in a boat, floating away from her on the river, whose flowing murmurs mingled with the murmur of her voice while she prayed to beseech her protecting care for him, wherever he might be, on land or sea, only asking for herself that she might be blest with the sight of him once more.

She took a ball from the sachet that she wore at her girdle, and threw it along the road, and the dog scampered after it, tumbling over and over in his eagerness to catch it, which made her laugh a musical laugh that was echoed from the opposite side of the river, making such a round of merriment that one might have fancied the naiads of the stream and the dryads of the wood had met there for a merrymaking.

But in a few minutes the dog and his mistress suddenly disappeared, and the cavalier, coming out of the thicket, hastened along the road until he came to a little path leading off into the wood. Turning into this he soon caught sight of her bright-colored skirt, fluttering away among the shadows of the ilex and arbutus, the laurels and larches that skirted the way.

Antonia, devoid of fear, penetrated deeper and deeper the sylvan solitude until she came to a spot particularly wild, where tree and shrub grew in great luxuriance, owing to the fact that a copious stream of limpid water, flowing from a half-ruined fountain, kept the soil in its neighborhood in a constantly moist condition. She stopped here and, leaning over the broken basin of the fountain, dipped her hand in the cool liquid. But the sweet waters were not destined to reach the sweeter lips, for just then the two armed men, Tito and Jaqueton, slipping out of the deep shade of the thickly-growing trees, came upon her from behind. One little scream

was all she uttered, the lower part of her face being immediately muffled in a scarf. But Carlos was not far off, and, hearing the single distressful cry, flew to the aid of his mistress, seizing the heavy boot of one of her assailants at the ankle, shaking and tugging at it with might and main.

Though the teeth of the dog could not penetrate the coarse leather, the man was angered at the audacity of the courageous little beast, and, drawing his sword, struck fiercely at it. The blow was well aimed, but with one of those quick movements by which dogs—especially little ones—avoid such blows, Carlos let go his hold, dodging the weapon, and twirling round like a top, returned with increased fury to the attack, while his mistress, now passive in the hands of her other captor, looked on with horror-dilated eyes, expecting to see her beloved friend decapitated. But the soldier had been obliged to face about to meet the second assault of his adversary, and, as his sword descended with a vicious whiz, he was astonished to find it stopped in its career by another blade, held so firmly that the clash of the two weapons jarred his arm to the shoulder.

The young cavalier who had been following Antonia, as soon as he saw the ruffians seize her had hastened to her assistance, but the two soldiers and their captive had been so intent on

the movements of the dog that they had not observed him, and, before they could recover from their astonishment, the sword of Captain Jacqueton, Carlos's antagonist, flew high in the air and fell far beyond his reach.

The fellow, seeing he had only one to deal with, grasped his poniard and called upon Tito to come to his assistance, but before he could make another move, or his comrade obey his summons, the blade of the cavalier pierced his right shoulder, and his arm fell powerless to his side.

Carlos, taking advantage of the timely arrival of an ally, rushed in to the attack once more, and finding he could make no impression on his enemy's boot, aimed higher, burying his teeth in the leg itself; so leaving the disabled man to contend with his four-legged foe, the cavalier turned his attention to Tito, who had drawn his sword but seemed in no haste to advance.

The man-at-arms may have been as good a swordsman as his adversary, but there was something in the steady, flashing glance of the stranger's eyes that confused and bewildered him, and, retreating before the rapid thrusts, which he barely had the presence of mind to parry, he stumbled and fell flat on his back.

“Mercy, señor!” he cried, as he felt the weight of a foot upon him, and saw the glistening point of a weapon close to his throat.

“Mercy!” echoed the cavalier, contemptuously. “Think’st thou that such as thou art deserve mercy at the hands of honest men? Were’t not that the blood of so vile a caitiff dis-honoreth the weapon it stains, I’d rid the world of thee at once. But get thee up and begone,” permitting the fellow to rise, “and henceforth bear this in mind—if any honest thought can find a resting-place there—the soldier should be true as well as brave, should protect the weak, not aid in their destruction.”

Captain Jaqueton had already quitted the field, and Tito now followed him, leaving the victor alone with the captive he had rescued.

An ejaculation of disgust escaped the lips of the young soldier, as he drove the point of his sword into the ground to cleanse it of the blood of the man he had wounded, and then, returning it to his scabbard and doffing his steel cap, he spoke to the girl.

“I fear me you are hurt, señorita,” he said. “These rough soldiers have rough ways and touch not aught with gentle hands.”

She had torn the scarf from her face as soon as Tito had released her, and with downcast eyes awaited the approach of her champion. The color had forsaken her face, and she stood leaning against the fountain—still as a statue, save for a little tremulous movement in the eye-lids and lips; while the dog Carlos licked the

hand hanging listlessly at her side, craving some sign of approbation.

"Thanks to your señoría, I am not hurt," she replied, in a low, unsteady voice, still looking on the ground.

"But you are very pale. Of a surety, you are hurt or ill."

"Those rude men frightened me," she said; "but there is no harm done," and, lifting her eyes to his, she looked at him with an expression that, being no adept at reading women's hearts through their faces, puzzled him. Had he possessed a tithe of that shallow wit of the Lovelaces who, in all ages, have fluttered about my lady's bower, he would have seen that gratitude was not all it implied. There was a little spot on the maiden's hand—she had often kissed it in secret—that burned now, white as it was to all outward seeming, with a strange, feverish heat, which radiated to her heart and appeared to set it on fire. But, as he had said, she was very pale—as pale as marble, and almost as still, and how was he to know that the blood was coursing through her veins like a wild, riotous torrent, while every pulse in her body was throbbing as if it would burst. The very truth was: Julio Hernandez was as poor in his knowledge of the gentler sex as he was in purse.

He had always been told by his nearest relative—an aunt with whom he had lived since he

was a boy of ten, when he lost both father and mother—that he was ugly and awkward, and, though he knew he had changed, that his long, big-boned limbs had filled out with solid muscle and were now not only shapely but strong, that his red hair had taken a darker shade, he did not know that he had grown into so magnificent a specimen of noble manhood as to be an object of admiration wherever he went. The feeling that had been induced by his aunt's uncomplimentary words still clung to him in a measure, and that, with his poverty, had made him rather shy of female society.

"Your dog is whining for your notice, señorita," he said. "He is a brave little varlet and deserves a reward."

"Yes," she replied, laying her hand on the animal's head and toying with its long, silky ears. "Poor Carlos! Had the wicked man killed thee I know not what thy unhappy mistress would have done. I was your debtor for his life before, señor, and now you have added so greatly to the debt that I can ne'er hope to discharge it."

She said this with a voice tremulous with emotion, while a faint color stole into her cheeks. This girl, usually self-reliant and brave, was weak and trembled in the presence of this one man.

"'Tis nothing, señorita," he replied, not knowing what else to say, and yet feeling that

there was something uncomplimentary to the maiden in putting it so. He was unaccustomed to the conventionalisms of society, and could not have made one of those flattering speeches which mean so little, for his life's ransom. The man was all frankness, and, had he spoken his mind, would have told her he thought her a very foolish maiden; but his nature, though frank, was not blunt and rude, so he simply said what he did think, "'Tis nothing, señorita," and added, after a little pause, "Methinks you have been indiscreet."

She thought he was going to lecture her, and stood ready and willing to be lectured by him.

"You should not go unattended, and especially should you avoid solitary places like this. There are many knaves such as those we have just parted with who would murder you for a ducat."

This was the sum and substance of his lecture, and she was sorry it was so short: she would have been pleased to listen to a lecture an hour longer had it pleased him to deliver it.

"The advice your señoría is so good as to bestow upon me shall not go unheeded," she said.

"I am but a young counselor," he replied, "and one who hath had little experience of your sex, but it seemeth to me that a maiden cannot be too circumspect in such rude times as these."

And now, with your permission, I will conduct you to your home."

So they walked along the woodland path together, she perfectly happy, and feeling that she would be content to walk with him thus through life; and he—well, in spite of her grand, queenly beauty, feeling as though he had been entrusted with the care of a truant child.

Naturally the thoughts of both recurred to the day when they met upon the quay. He saw in her the girl, little more than a child, holding the wet dog in her arms, crying and laughing over it, and she in him her beau ideal of a noble cavalier. The fact was, in the stirring life he had led since that day, he had almost forgotten her, while to her he had been ever present, living in her heart, where he had taken up his abode for all time, perhaps for all eternity.

Arriving at the road by the river, she turned her face toward the city, and was proceeding in that direction when he arrested her footsteps.

"Señorita," he said, "I have a barqueta near at hand, an' you fear not the water, 'twill prove the quicker and the pleasanter journey."

She had no fear of the water, and made no objection to his proposal, though the quickness of the journey was no inducement: she only feared the barqueta would glide too swiftly. But she did not tell him this—it was a whisper of her heart to her soul—and, seated in the stern of the boat, Carlos, crouching at her feet, with his head

in her lap, she enjoyed the rapture of the moment to its fullest. "O, that the Guadaluver were the river of life, and that we might glide on, on, on, thus forever!" was her mental wish.

CHAPTER VIII.

"It seems this young cavalier doth always appear upon the scene just i' the nick o' time to render thee a service," said Beneberak.

There was a savor of sarcasm in the tone of the old man's voice, and Antonia looked up quickly from the broidery on which she was engaged, while the color in her cheeks deepened from rose to scarlet.

"What mean you, grandfather?" she asked.

"Why, marry! doth it not seem so? Was he not *fortunately* near at hand when thy dog was in peril of drowning? Just at a time, too, when all other cavaliers were following the King. And here again, yestere'en, who but he should come to thy rescue when thou, with thy indiscreet folly, had placed thyself in jeopardy?"

"'Tis true," replied the girl; "but what would you? He was there, no other being near, and though I must e'en confess I owed my misfortune to mine own indiscretion, as you say, that doth not lessen the degree of my gratitude."

"And thinkest thou he'll content him with thy gratitude? 'Tis a coin of light weight, and these gallants value it not. They want the *quid pro quo*, as the doctors of the law have it, and your

gratitude is a mere sentiment of no worth in the market."

"Oh, grandfather, how can you be so ungenerous—to harbor such base suspicions of a noble gentleman?"

"Child, child! an 'thou didst know the world as I know it, thou'dst scarce ask so silly a question. But did not this same noble gentleman tell thee his name?"

"Nay. Yet, nath'less, I know it."

"How's this, wench? How shouldst thou know his name an' he not tell it thee?"

"The barquero into whose charge he delivered the barqueta did call him el Señor Hernandez, and thus it is I know it."

"Umph!"

"And now that you know his name, will you seek him and thank him for his kindness? 'Twill be but civil, methinks."

"'Twill be but civil, think'st thou?" repeated the old man, sarcastically. Then, after a few minutes' cogitation, "Perchance, 'twill be as well to do so, and if we can square accounts by the loan of a few ducats on my part, so much the better. When once he hath my money in his pouch I doubt me we shall never see nor hear of him again."

"Grandfather! grandfather!" exclaimed Antonia, indignantly, "this cavalier hath asked naught of you. Think you money can settle

all accounts, pay the noblest soul for the noblest deed, as the meanest hind for the meanest labor; cure all ills, cancel all obligations? Money hath its uses, but it cannot buy love nor can it take the place of gratitude."

"Thou talkest like a simpleton," said the old man. "Money is everything—a king—a god—a demon! A hell-born demon! with all the powers of hell at its back. 'Twill buy the peasant in his hovel, the prince in his palace; and the vilest rascal that e'er cut a throat will cheat the gallows have he but gold eno' to throw i' the balance.

"Ay!" he continued, vehemently, rising from his chair and striking the floor with his cane, "Justice, 'tis said, is blind; but she is not deaf. She can hear the chink of gold—ha! ha!—she can hear the chink of *gold* and shutteth not her ears to its music."

With another mocking laugh he quitted the room, leaving Antonia to think over what he had said and wonder if it could be true.

To the young, ardent soul, filled with a sense of the sweetness of life and the beauty of pure, unselfish love, the idea that money governs man in all his thoughts, all his actions, is abhorrent, and this maiden would not believe it was so important and all-powerful a factor in the world's affairs as her grandfather had said it was. The rare and costly luxuries which wealth had purchased for her pleasure were well enough—she

liked to have them; but they were as naught compared with other things—not tangible things—in her estimation.

The power of gold, as Beneberak had described it, was incomprehensible to her. That man would barter his honor—in which was included everything worthy in his nature—for it was a thought too degrading to humanity to be admitted into a mind undefiled by worldly ambitions. No, no, men were not all willing to sell their souls for gold; it was only her grandfather's cynicism that had led him to make so broad an assertion.

Later in the day Beneberak told his granddaughter he had seen the Señor Hernandez.

"It pleaseth me that you did trouble yourself to find him," she said. "I would not have him think us lacking in good breeding."

"Nor shall he. He seemeth an honest youth eno', and hath not that wisdom o' the world I did accredit him with ere I had spoken with him."

"An honest youth eno'," repeated Antonia. "And hath he naught beside his honesty to recommend him?"

"Doth it not suffice? An' he be honest—as he seemeth—I tell thee 'tis much."

"'Twere strange indeed an' he were dishonest."

"Tut, tut, what know'st thou of the matter?"

Honesty or dishonesty sheweth not on the surface. The fruit that looketh fairest to the eye is oftentimes bitter to the taste, and the heart of man is beyond thy reading. But, vaya! this youth is better than I looked to find, and, thinking a loan of an hundred ducats would scarce come amiss to him—”

“Oh, grandfather! I trust you offered not—”

“Nay, child, nay; I but thought on’t. The man is poor but proud, as I quickly perceived, and I’ll warrant he’d have ta’en the proffer as an insult. Ho, ho! The pride of these Castilians—for he is of Castile, whence came thy mother—is something to marvel at, especially an’ it be rooted in poverty, and the poorer the soil the better the tree flourisheth.”

“Think you, grandfather, that pride is to be contemned?”

“Nay,” replied the old man, hesitatingly, as one answers who finds himself caught in a word-trap, “nay, I said not so; but, truly, pride and poverty be poor bed-fellows.”

“I know not,” said Antonia, “but to me it seemeth otherwise. When one hath poverty, if he have not pride then is he in poor case indeed.”

“This Señor Hernandez,” said Beneberak—dropping the subject of his pride, having no argument to oppose to the girl’s logic—“though

still little more than a boy, tells me he hath been ten years a soldier. 'Tis a trade I like not—a brutal trade, and profitless to all save them in authority. But that importeth not; if men must e'en have their throats cut, there must be other men to do the business for them, and do it rightly. The butcher, whether of man or beast, must be bred to his calling; for shame it were that either the one or the other should make a botch of his work. This is the age when the strong arm of brute force ruleth the world, and he who would not be oppressed must be one of the oppressors; so he dons casque and cuirass, sword and dagger, and goeth forth to harry the land and slay them who would live—if live they might—by honest toil.

"But what boots it talking to thee, or any of thy sex? 'Tis a mere wasting of fair words. The hero of thy imagination is a soldier—always a soldier. Thou seest the pageant of the victor when he returneth from his campaigns—the triumphal arches, the banners, the glistening arms; and thou hearest the plaudits that greet him; thou seest not the field of blood, where the dumb beast he bestrides trampled out the souls of men, thou seest not the thousands of pallid faces looking up with staring eyes to Heaven, and thou hearest not the groans of anguish that come from men with mangled limbs, the shattered images of God, that cry aloud to Him for

vengeance—vengeance on the men who, for their own selfish ends, have made them food for the vulture and the wolf."

Antonia made no response to this long tirade—she knew it would be useless—and presently the old man quitted the room, to the door of which, however, he returned, after a few minutes' absence, to say, "I did forget to tell thee, girl; I bade this Señor Hernandez sup with us to-night. Thou mayst prepare for his coming, an' his Castilian pride forbid him not to break bread with a son of Abraham."

CHAPTER IX.

THE NEW WORLD.

After a short respite the Indians once more made their appearance on the borders of the forest, but only in small skirmishing parties, who contented themselves with sending a few flights of arrows into the camp, which, doing no harm, were unnoticed by the Spaniards, to whom the necessity of husbanding their ammunition was manifest.

They had wisely come to the conclusion that their foe was not to be altogether contemned, and employed themselves strengthening their fortifications and preparing for the worst, remembering, now that the mischief was done, and they had aroused the enmity of the natives, that they could expect no succor from any quarter, unless some ship sailing along the coast should put into the sound, which was a chance too unlikely to count upon at all.

Nawatonah still remained a prisoner, obstinate, silent, and with the ferocious look of a wild beast—a beautiful panther newly caged. Had she been possessed of any weapon—any harmful implement whatever—it would have been dangerous.

for the Italian to approach her. But the room in which she was confined was bare; there was not a thing in it except the pallet of moss which was spread in a corner for her to lie upon, and she could only show the rage that consumed her heart by the fierce light that flashed from her dark eyes whenever he came near her.

On two occasions, when he had opened the door, she had tried to effect her escape; but, though she was as agile as the panther to which she has already been likened, he had been too quick for her, and then, partly to punish her, partly to gratify the passion that raged within him, he had caught her in his arms, and covered her face with hot kisses, until it burned like fire with the boiling blood that rushed to it.

Some of the men were in favor of releasing the girl, hoping thus to propitiate the savages and bring about a return to friendly relations with them; but denial had only heightened Rossi's passion, and, arguing that her desire for revenge, if she obtained her liberty, would incite her to do all she could to inflame the hostile feelings of the natives rather than anything to allay them, he persuaded his followers that their best policy was to keep her as a hostage, by means of which they might eventually negotiate a peace on their own terms.

The gigantic pine already mentioned was near the river, and one of the sailors suggested that

it might be made to serve the purpose of a look-out station. The idea was a good one, so the sailors were at once set to work to carry it out, and it was understood that the station was to be chiefly in their charge.

Strong bars of oak, cut from the few stunted live-oaks that grew inside the earthworks, were made as smooth as it was possible to make them with such implements as they had, and then fastened securely, at regular intervals, one above another, to the trunk of the tree, until its spreading plume of dark, wiry foliage was reached, where a good resting-place was found among the great branches, in which a man might lie down and sleep in perfect safety—if he felt so inclined.

The chief object in establishing the lookout had been to obtain an extended view of the river above and the marshes opposite—for between the mouth of the river on which the Spaniards were encamped and the other mouth, which was farther to the east, lay a number of marshy islands covered with tall, rank grass. But it was discovered that, looking toward the south, one could see from this elevation over the low islands lying off the coast, the eye sweeping the sea beyond for miles on either hand, so that any vessel coming within a league of the islands would surely be seen by the man on duty—unless he forgot his duty and went to sleep.

Not much satisfaction was felt in the knowledge of this fact, however, as there appeared little, if any, probability of the beleaguered garrison being able to attract the attention of the crew of any such vessel, should she make her appearance. A great fire in the top of the tree might prove a signal that would induce passing voyagers to stop and investigate, however, and so it was determined to make preparations toward that end.

First a platform was arranged for the greater comfort of the occupant of this mid-air post, and rude balustrades were stretched from branch to branch to insure his safety; and then a quantity of resinous pine wood, obtained by a sallying-party, was hoisted by means of a block and tackle rigged to one of the limbs of the tree, and piled, ready to be fired at any moment; after which, to complete all, a flagstaff was secured in such way as to reach above the top of the tree, from which the royal standard of Castile and Aragon floated out on the breeze, saluted by a round from the two falconets and the shouts of the soldiers.

Thus prepared, the little band of men, brave though brutal, awaited the assault of their enemies, which they did not believe would be much longer delayed.

An ominous stillness reigned in the forest, the savage skirmishers having ceased to make any demonstrations whatever.

All through the hot days, which were lengthening now, not a sound was heard coming from the dense, dark mass of trees, and this solemn silence was only broken when night made the scene still more dismal, by the agonizing cry of the panther and the blood-curdling shriek of the great horned owl.

What could be more depressing than this death-like stillness of the outer world, broken only by the most direful sounds of animate nature? The spirits of the soldiers soon began to be affected by it. Forced to keep strict watch and ward, as men besieged, while neither seeing nor hearing an enemy, a feeling of despondency oppressed them, and their thoughts naturally turned to what they considered their grievances.

“Why,” they asked each other, “do we submit to the control of this Italian—this foreigner? Is he, who to gratify a selfish passion hath made us enemies where we had friends, the one who should command us? Is there not a Spaniard among us fit to be our leader, that we must continue to obey him like so many whipped dogs?”

Thus they communed with each other, emphasizing the fact that they of their number who considered the Italian rightfully entitled to the supreme command were such as he especially favored, until their murmurs grew into ominous growls, which were but the indications of approaching mutiny.

Rossi was informed of all this by his lieutenant Gonzales. He was not lacking in courage, but, possessing that politic shrewdness for which his race has always been noted, he knew it would be the wiser course to meet such an emergency with diplomacy rather than with a bold assertion of authority; so he sought the very men who were loudest in their denunciations of him, and addressed them in a conciliatory speech.

“Comrades,” he said, “I am told there are some among you who object to me as their commander because that I am an Italian. Is there so great a difference between the Italian and the Spanish races that we must needs base a quarrel on so small a matter? We are so much alike, both in aspect and speech, that the real foreigner, he of England and he of Germany, can scarce tell the one from the other. We have always been first cousins, as it were, and we fought side by side under the great captain. Besides, can we forget that this very land, this new world where we now are, was discovered by an Italian?”

“Ay, marry! but he was a red-headed Italian,” said one of the men, and this bit of shallow wit elicited a general laugh, in which Rossi joined. When you would disarm your enemy you must laugh with him, whether his wit be great or small.

“But all this importeth not,” continued the wily Carlo. “I sought you not as a boaster but

as one willing to do what he may to restore harmony—even if to do so it be necessary that he resign that little shadow of authority which seemeth to be a grievance to you. "There!" tearing off the insignia of office that he wore attached to his baldric, and casting it among them, "take it and bestow it upon him you think the most worthy of it! I will gladly obey him, whomsoever he may be. 'Tis but a trifling bauble, of no worth at all an't be not worn with the good will of all."

Waiting a few minutes and perceiving that the rosette and cross he had thrown away remained untouched, he exclaimed, "Will none take up the gage? Of a surety we must have a head, and there should be one among you worthy to be our leader. Without a head we are useless as a body. Vaya! Whom shall we salute as our commander?"

There was no response. These men were without exception ignorant, common fellows—the lowest type of men-at-arms, accustomed to follow and to obey, not to lead or be obeyed, and when the opportunity was offered for one of them to prove himself worthy of a higher destiny that one was not found among them who was ready to come forward and assume the responsibility. Even had there been a spirit among them bold enough to try it, his comrades would have been the first to turn upon him and wrest his newly-acquired authority from him.

They were jealous of Rossi's authority over them because he was not a Spaniard. They would have been far more jealous of one of their own number because he was a Spaniard of their own class lifted into a station above them.

The situation was becoming ridiculous and the men perceived it. One of them—the most insignificant looking man in the crowd—stepped forward and picked up the badge of office.

"Ah," said the Italian, with well-feigned semblance of respect, "at last. Salute, *el señor capitano*," and, unsheathing his sword, he went through the form of a military salute with the greatest gravity.

The absurdity of the whole affair was now so apparent to the actors in it that they joined in a chorus of boisterous laughter.

"Nay, *señor*," said the man who had picked up the badge, which he restored as he spoke to its original possessor, "I desire not the trinket. I am but a common soldier, and know full well my deficiencies. I can fight when need be, but must fight under one who knoweth more of the science of war than I do."

Then Rossi, holding the badge out in his hand, looked round on the man's laughing comrades.

"Will none of you undertake the charge?" he asked.

No answer.

"Shall we make Pablo Gonzales our captain?"

"Pablo? Nay, nay!" they shouted with one voice.

"I'd as lief take service under the devil himself," said one.

"Or his high priest," added a second.

"Pablo is his high priest, methinks," said yet another, "and 'twere more commendable and more profitable to serve the master than the man."

This last speech was received with shouts of approval, and Gonzales, who was standing behind Rossi, leaning on an arquebuse, accepted the compliment with a grim smile and a shrug of his huge shoulders.

"Señor," he said, "I doubt not there be half a score of knaves, at the least reckoning, in camp who believe themselves equal to Gonsalvo or the Cid himself; all they lack is the opportunity to prove it. There," pointing to a squat, bow-legged fellow who stood grinning at him, "stands Anibal Oledor, who can make you as fine an *olla podrida* as the best cook in his majesty's kitchen. Now, to my thinking, your good cook is as rare as your great captain, but Anibal is over-modest, señor, over-modest, like his boon companion there, Angelo Ynagra, a man who can curse louder than a Dutchman when the weather is fair and say the pater noster backwards faster than ever San Dominick did when the demons of hell are turned loose on the wind."

Thus, as often happens, a serious crisis was

safely past with the turning of a jest. The men who had been foremost in fomenting sedition now said they really had no particular objections to Señor Rossi as their commander, but were weary of their present monotonous and restricted life, and would have him do something to put an end to it.

As long as there had been peace between them and the savages, they had been free to explore the surrounding country and hunt the game with which it abounded, but now they were denied these pleasures, and were cooped up within the narrow limits of their fortifications, while the ardor of the chase had not been supplemented by the excitement of battle. To men accustomed as they had been to active campaigning, this sort of life was intolerable; it weighed upon their spirits like an incubus.

“What will you?” asked Rossi. “Will you go forth into the wilderness to seek the enemy? Wherever you will go there I am willing to lead, though it be to the death.”

This was too serious a question to be settled at once, so it was left for further consideration, and in the meantime Rossi, now full master of the situation, rested content. So long as his authority was acknowledged by the men he cared not whether they remained where they were or took up their line of march in search of some avenue of escape from their perilous posi-

tion. There is something fascinating in possessing supreme command over one's fellows, no matter how limited their number, in being the head even of an insignificant body.

CHAPTER X.

The commandant's endeavors to overcome the repugnance of the Indian maiden had been unavailing. All his advances had been received with silent contempt, and whenever he had attempted to press his suit with unusual warmth she had repulsed him with a look of loathing and scorn. It was evident that she hated him. Late in the afternoon, the day after he had come to an amicable understanding with his discontented soldiers, he entered her prison chamber, determined to make one more effort, and if that failed to resort to a method much practiced in that age with obstinate people—the torture.

The girl sat on the floor, looking wistfully through the barred window at the glowing sky. The sun was near his setting. Though she had never uttered a word of complaint, it was plain she pined for the wild freedom to which she had been accustomed, and although she appeared to bear the enforced restraint to which she was subjected with the stoical indifference that the Indian is carefully schooled in, she could not entirely conceal the fact that she already suffered torture—that torture of the soul which is so

much harder to endure when it has to be borne without any outward signs of distress.

“Nawatonah,” said Rossi, and there was a plaintive intonation in his musical voice, “why wilt thou force me to do that which it grieveth my heart to do? Why dost thou obstinately reject my love?”

He spoke this last word with a little hesitation, as though he felt the mockery of it, and the woman looked at him with a scornful curl of her thin lips, and a fierce gleam in her black eyes which showed that she divined his thoughts, although she might not entirely understand his speech.

“Thinkest thou,” he continued, “that thy people will come to deliver thee? They think not of thee. But,” he immediately added, “they are not thy people. Thou hast been a captive and a slave from thy childhood to them who wronged thy people, them to whom, rejecting love and liberty, thou would’st now return.”

The Indian’s eye flashed, and, turning her gaze once more to the sky, she murmured in the curious Spanish idiom she had learned, more to herself than to him, “They have been good to Nawatonah—she hath buried the past.”

“Was it good,” said he, “to destroy Nawatonah’s kindred?”

“The dead return not,” said the Indian, still

as though she were communing with herself: "they went out to death."

"They were driven out to death," said Rossi; "driven to their graves in the sea by these people to whom thy heart clingeth, but whom thou shouldst hate."

"I hate thee!" said Nawatonah, with a vicious snap of her teeth.

The Italian, who came of a stock that never forgets an injury, but remembers even unto the third and fourth generation; that deems the life blood of one man small atonement for a slight wrong, could not understand this woman's love for the people who had driven her own race to desperation and death. He did not know that among the aborigines of North America the law of adoption was as binding as that of consanguinity—that a captive once adopted into a tribe became as much a member of that tribe as though born in its wigwams and reared among its youths and maidens, all thought of enmity or vengeance being thenceforward buried in oblivion.

He looked at his victim with some show of compassion, but none of relenting.

"Thou wilt force me to do that I would fain leave undone," he said. "Thou wilt not suffer me to love thee. What, then, can I? Hate thee, as thou sayest thou hatest me? So be it. I will e'en return hate for hate, and thou shalt learn

that the hate of the white man is something to dread."

As he turned to leave her, the girl leaped to her feet and bounded past him to the door. It was partially open, and she had nearly escaped through it, when he seized her long hair and dragged her back, shoving the door to with his foot as he did so.

"Ha!" he said; "again? And thou hadst nearly accomplished thy purpose this time."

Then he clasped her in his arms and hotly kissed her, while she strove to get free.

Heretofore, when she had attempted to escape, and he had foiled her, he had been content to kiss her and let her go; but now he held her, pressing her close and kissing her over and over again, though she gnashed her teeth and spat upon him, hissing like a snake, while she tore his hair and beard with her hands.

Then began a terrible struggle—a struggle carried on in silence; such a struggle as sometimes ends in murder. The man was no longer a reasoning creature—he was a brute, ready to sacrifice everything, even his life, to gratify his brutal passion, to prevent which the woman was as ready to sacrifice hers.

He was strong, and it seemed as though an easy victory for him were a foregone conclusion. But the woman was wiry and agile, and the resolution to defend her chastity, not only re-

newed what strength she had lost during her imprisonment, but added something to it.

After a time Rossi's grasp relaxed. He was panting and foaming at the mouth. In an instant, with the undulating movement of a serpent, she glided from his arms, and ran to the other side of the room, where she stood at bay, watching her enemy with a look of resolute defiance, her naked bosom heaving, her mouth firmly set, her nostrils dilating and contracting with a short puffing sound as she breathed.

Still panting, he stood looking at her a few minutes with burning eyes, and then returned to the assault, rushing upon his victim with the fury of a mad bull. She eluded his grasp at first, but, making a second dash at her, he caught her in his embrace again—this time so as to pinion her arms to her side. With a desperate effort she tried to free them, and, failing, quickly changed her mode of defense, seizing his cheek between her strong, white teeth. Lifting his right hand he struck her on the forehead, but the blow had little effect, owing to their being at such close quarters, and, finding her hands once more at liberty, the woman twisted them into his hair again and clung to him with tooth and nail, like a veritable wildcat.

The man was decidedly at a disadvantage now, and he knew it. He tried to choke her off, but could not get a good grip of her throat, so he

caught her by her long black locks and pulled with all his might. The hair came out in handfuls, but never for an instant did she loosen the firm grip of her jaws, and her teeth kept grinding into his flesh until they met and the piece was torn out. She spat it out of her mouth with an expression of disgust, and at the same time, with a great effort, he managed to free himself of her, and then he cast her from him on to the floor, where she lay breathing heavily.

“Devil!” he said, regarding her with a look in which all the rage of his heart was concentrated. “Devil that thou art I’ll be avenged of thee. Thou shalt burn for it! burn, vile witch!”

When he had left her the girl still lay where he had thrown her, her eyes, from which the fierce fire of savage ire had not yet faded, wandering, with a rapid scrutinizing glance around the room, examining it carefully from the comb of the roof to the floor.

The walls were of hewn timbers, well fitted together, so as to leave no cracks wide enough for one to insert his fingers into, and the roof was covered with short boards, roughly chopped out, not unlike the clapboards now in use for the same purpose; the rafters and sheathing being of light pine poles with the bark peeled off. Half way between the comb of the roof and the top of the walls were several similar poles, running across from rafter to rafter—wind beams—placed there when the roof was in course of construc-

tion to steady the framework. On these the Indian's eyes eventually rested, seeming to measure the distance from them to the floor, and after awhile she got up and stood directly under one of them, looking upward, and stretching her arms above her head. She saw at once that it would be impossible for her to leap high enough to grasp it with her hands, even had she possessed her usual strength and activity, which had been greatly impaired by confinement, and, crouching on the floor near the window, with a little sigh she looked out through the bars, which she had often tried to loosen with her hands, and appeared to consider the situation. While she was thinking, her fingers toyed mechanically with the only garment she wore, a short kilt, or skirt, made of the dressed hide of a deer.

Suddenly she sprang to her feet, and stood for the space of a minute listening; then she stripped herself stark naked. With the garment grasped in one hand, and half concealing her round, graceful limbs, she listened intently again—an Indian Artemis, fearing surprise—when, hearing no sound without, she seated herself upon the moss that was her bed, and, covering her lower limbs with a part of it, proceeded, with the aid of her teeth, to tear the pliant hide into strips, looking in the dusky light of the deepening twilight like some wild creature devouring its prey. These strips she plaited together, making a small but

strong rope, one end of which she tied into a large knot—an irregularly shaped ball.

This done she got up and went to the door, where she remained a few minutes with her ear against it; then, apparently satisfied that Rossi would not intrude upon her privacy again soon, she went to the darkest side of the room, and, with the skill of a practised ball pitcher, tossed her rude ball over one of the wind beams, catching it as it fell. She now untied the knot at the end, and, tying the two ends of her rope together, slipped it along the smooth pole as far as it would go, where she left it dangling. Then she went back to her couch of moss, the greater portion of which she silently and deftly plaited into strands. These strands she quickly wove into a mat that she fastened around her waist, in lieu of the garment she had destroyed.

When her preparations were completed, she sat still, eating a little of the food that had stood untasted all day, while watching the last glimmer of daylight die out of the sky.

Total darkness at length enveloped her, and she laid down to rest and wait, the almost inaudible sound of her soft breathing alone breaking the silence of the place. The Great Bear hung in the eastern sky. She could see it from where she lay, and, with the proverbial patience of her race, beheld it climb upward, changing her position occasionally in order to keep it in view. When it reached the meridian she arose

and glided noiselessly across the room. Seizing the rope she had prepared, she climbed it with the agility of an acrobat, and, standing on the wind-beam, commenced removing some of the boards of the roof.

It was easier work than she had anticipated, for they were only secured with binders—poles laid across each course on the outside, and secured at the ends—and were slipped aside without much difficulty.

As soon as Nawatonah had made an opening large enough for her body to pass through, she thrust her head and shoulders out, and drew a long breath, and though it was the same air that she had breathed through the open window below, it seemed to her the sweetest breath she had ever drawn. It was the breath of freedom—for she did not doubt that her escape now was certain.

It would seem strange that she had not thought of this mode of escape before; but until now she had not been so hard pressed. Up to this time Rossi had never attempted actual brute violence, and she had sat down to await patiently the coming of the warriors to her rescue—when she expected to be amply revenged. She had heard the din of battle and wondered why it had ceased, but never doubted it would be renewed; for she firmly believed the Indians, who so greatly outnumbered the white men, would be able to overpower and destroy them, and she ex-

pected any night to be awakened from her slumbers by the warwhoops and yells of the braves as they slaughtered and scalped her foes in their very camp. Such was the faith she had in their courage and cunning that she would still have waited had not her recent experience roused her from the sort of fatalistic lethargy into which she had sunk, and forced her to act for herself, feeling certain, as she did, that the Italian, whose evil passions were now thoroughly aroused, would take prompt measures to be avenged for the mortifying defeat he had suffered.

Resting her hands on the edges of the hole she had made, Nawatonah lifted her body through it, and, squatting closely, looked around and listened. Nothing was to be seen save the smouldering campfires, and the collection of low huts, looking like a great black shadow without specific form, and no sound did she hear, except the plashing of the waves on the beach; so, sliding softly down to the eaves of the roof, she dropped to the ground with as little noise as a bird makes when it alights. Lying still as she had fallen, she listened again—just for an instant—and then, starting up, she ran toward the river, swiftly and noiselessly, as the wild turkey runs when alarmed.

She knew there were sentinels stationed along the river's bank—she had seen them from the window of her prison—and when she had run a

certain distance she stopped and laid flat down on the sand behind a little clump of palmettos.

In a few minutes a sentinel came by, passing on without perceiving her. Quick as a flash she was up and in the water—under it—not a sign of her to be seen, not even a ripple to tell the course she had taken.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD WORLD.

“There, señor caballero, there is the ship. She is small, as you perceive; but as staunch a caravel as hath e'er sailed out of the Guadalquivir. Her owners—whose agent I am—have chosen her for this particular service because of her speed.”

“Truly, Señor Murillo,” replied Julio Hernandez, “being little acquaint with such matters, it scarce becometh me to offer an opinion with respect to this particular ship or any other, but e'en to my uneducated eye she seemeth a good ship.”

“Ay, señor, that *is* she; and she will be well appointed, likewise; so, should you be persuaded to accept the command in this adventure, you will have wise and well trained pilots and mariners of experience on whose skill you may rely.”

“I doubt it not,” said the Señor Hernandez, “and, having pondered the matter since you broached it, señor, I can perceive no reason why I may not undertake this charge.”

“ ‘Tis well,” said Beneberak: “your commission shall be applied for to the Commissioner for the Indies, and in the meantime you can make

such disposition of your private affairs as you may deem needful before taking so long a journey."

The caravel was lying at one of the quays, and the two men went aboard of her.

"Although I am no mariner," said the cavalier, looking around, "I am not altogether ignorant of the uses of the various appliances I see here, having been one of the company on a similar vessel in the fleet of Don John when he overcame the Moslem in the Bay of Lepanto."

"And yet you say you have had no experience, señor caballero?"

"Methinks such part as a man may take in one sea-fight like that can scarce be accounted nautical experience. But an' you be willing, Señor Murillo, to trust me with the command of this same caravel, I will e'en undertake the adventure."

"Basta, señor caballero; I doubt not you will conduct the affair to the satisfaction of those who employ you."

"I shall hold me bound to use my best endeavors to that end."

"I doubt it not, I doubt it not. And now, señor, this matter being settled between us, we will return, an' it please you, to my poor domicile, where we will draw up such papers as the law requireth to make all such compacts binding."

A little later Beneberak and his guest sat at a table in a room in the old Jew's house very busy with pen, ink and parchment. I say they were very busy, but the truth is Beneberak was busy, while the cavalier sat watching Antonia, who was tending her flowers in the patio.

It was towards the middle of the afternoon and the sun shone aslant across the little enclosure, filling one side of it with a warm glow of light, while the other rested under a cool shadow where everything was softened but nothing hidden.

To Antonia her flowers were sweet companions, and on them she bestowed much of her time. Each sung its little song or told its simple story to her—some of her native land, of courtly knights and ladies fair in festive halls, others of far-off climes, of gorgeous plumaged birds and strange, wild-eyed creatures in woodland solitudes, and she delighted to be among them, to listen to their voices, coming to her laden with sweet odors.

With a small vase of the ancient Etruscan pattern, which she filled from a fountain always playing in the center of the patio, she refreshed the plants by pouring tiny streams of water on their stems, whence it trickled down to the thirsty roots, and Julio Hernandez, marking her graceful movements, the perfect pose of her elegant figure, as she performed her labor of love, for the first time felt a strange thrill at his heart—

strange to him, whose thoughts had heretofore been occupied by naught save ambitious dreams —dreams in which love had no part.

When the old man had finished writing he read what he had written to the young one, who appeared to listen, but really heard not a word, and when asked to put his signature to the parchment did so mechanically, scarcely knowing what he did.

“Now, señor,” said Beneberak, rising, “an’ you will come with me to the Commissioner; we will make application for your commission as capitán commandante of the caravel *Esperanza*.”

El Señor Hernandez gave a little start, as if suddenly recalled to recollection of the business in hand, and with his eyes still turned in the direction of the patio, said, “Cannot this be done without my presence, señor Murillo?”

“Ay,” replied the other, to whom the preoccupation of his companion and its cause were very apparent, “ay, it may be.”

“Then will I await you here, an’ it please you. The señorita Antonia will doubtless not deny me her company.”

“As you will,” said Beneberak, and a satisfied smile curled his lips, as he went out, leaving the young cavalier to discover the drift of the maiden’s inclinations for himself.

“ ’Tis an honest youth,” he said, “and poor; and the old Jew’s granddaughter, with the dower she will have, will be no bad match for him. Ah,

well," he added, as he pursued his way in the street, "let them woo, let them woo, and when he hath returned from this venture, he shall have her, be he still of the same mind."

It would appear that the old man's opinion with regard to the character of the Spanish cavaliers of the day had undergone a change since he had held discourse with his granddaughter on that, to him, irritating subject, but such was not the case. He simply thought he had discovered an exception to the general rule in Don Julio Hernandez.

That young soldier of fortune—for such he really was—as soon as he found himself left at liberty to do so, joined Antonia in the patio.

"Good Morrow, señorita," he said, doffing his broad-brimmed, plumed hat; "I trust I may not be deemed an intruder in this temple of Flora."

"Your señoría is welcome," replied Antonia, blushing, though she tried hard to appear composed.

"The flowers seem to flourish under your care," he said, not knowing what else to say, "and I trust they are grateful to the fair priestess who presideth over their destinies."

He was little accustomed to this style of conversation, and it came awkwardly to him, but the maiden, laughing, replied, "If to deck themselves in beauty and offer up sweet incense be evidence of gratitude, of a surety they be grateful, señor. See this jasmine, which belongeth

properly to Africa: 'tis covered with great white blossoms, whose odor filleth the place with sweetness."

"'Tis a wondrous plant, señorita," said the cavalier, putting his nose to one of the blooms and inhaling its perfume. "And came it from Africa, say you? Then will I bring you one to match it from the Indies."

"The Indies, señor," repeated the girl, the light of happiness which had come into her dark, lustrous eyes fading away, and the warm color deserting her cheeks.

"Ay, señorita; for thither am I shortly to sail on that most excellent ship *La Esperanza*."

La Esperanza, she knew, was to depart from Seville for Hispaniola and other parts of the newly-discovered western world, in about a month's time, and her heart sank when she thought that in so short a while he would be gone, perchance never to return; for not all of them who went forth from the old world rejoicing and full of brilliant hopes came back to tell the tale of their adventures or misadventures, and too often rumor of hardship, misery and death was all that reached the ears of the loved ones left behind.

It was some time before Antonia spoke again, and she studiously kept her face turned away from the eyes of the cavalier, as she slowly poured a thread-like stream of water from her vase over the jasmine, but at last, with a little

tremor in the voice, which seemed to have lost some of its rich, musical resonance, she said, "You told me that you would doubtless abide in Seville, *señor*."

"Ay, *señorita*," was the reply, "and I did so propose; but *el señor Murillo*, your grandfather, hath made me offer of the chief command on this caravel, the which is, truly, a stroke of fortune such as I ne'er had hoped for."

"And—and you have closed with his offer?"

"Even now have the articles of our compact been signed and sealed. But, *señorita*," when he perceived that Antonia, with pale face and eyes downcast remained silent, "this business seemeth not to please you."

She had set her vase down on a low, marble shelf on which were some jars containing plants, and her hands rested on the lip of it. She lifted her eyes to his, but timidly.

"Why should it not please me, *señor*?" she asked.

"Truly, I know not," said the cavalier, "but you seem not to rejoice in this good fortune that hath come to me."

"And call you that good fortune which tempteth you to seek unknown dangers?"

The soldier smiled.

"Know you not, *señorita*," he said, "that the true knight maketh no account of danger? It rather giveth zest to the enterprise."

"Ay, *señor*, so it is writ in the books I have

read, but—but—” and her eyes dropped again before the earnest gaze he had fixed upon her.

“Tell me, *señorita*,” he said, taking one of her hands in his, “tell me, Antonia,” and now his own voice shook a little nervously, “would it grieve you an’ I should ne’er return?”

“Grieve me?” she repeated, still looking down. “Of a surety, *señor*. Do I not owe you much? And should I forget it, think you?”

“Thou owest me naught,” he said, changing his mode of speech to one that seemed in an instant to bring them nearer together. “ ’Tis not on the footing of creditor and debtor that I would stand with thee.”

She did not speak, but stood still, listening for his next words with sweet, trembling anticipation.

“Antonia—*amor mia*,” he said, putting his arm around her and drawing her close to him. Then he kissed her sweet lips, upturned to him as she lay in his arms panting, and they stood among the flowers, silent; he wondering how such happiness had come to him so suddenly, she scarcely conscious of aught save his presence. Since the day she first saw him he had been her hero, her demi-god, as beautiful as Absalom, as grand as Absalom’s father, but never in her wildest dreams had their two lives touched as now in reality, and her soul was whelmed in a flood of joy unspeakable.

CHAPTER XII.

The departure of *La Esperanza* was now a question of only a few days, and Don Julio Hernandez was aboard superintending the mounting of her armament, a matter of great importance at that time, when every ship sailing the seas was considered lawful prey by any rover that could catch and capture her. Having completed his arrangements entirely to his satisfaction, he returned to the shore, and, hurrying across the quay, looking over his shoulder at the caravel, of which he was very proud, came in collision with a short, thick-set man-at-arms.

"*Hola, Señor!*" exclaimed the soldier, facing about and laying his two hands on the other's shoulders. Then he broke into a pleasant laugh.

"*Por el capitánazo Gonsalvo,*" he exclaimed, "what rare good fortune hath led me across your path this day, *Señor Hernandez?*"

"Rare good fortune, truly, *Rodrigo*," replied Don Julio; "for of all the men I know in this wide world, thou art the one it delighteth me most to see. I stand in need of an honest friend, to whom I may entrust a mission of much delicacy, and thou art the very one to serve me."

"I take it to my credit that you should deem me worthy of your trust, *señoria*," replied Rodrigo, "and, can I serve you, will be only too glad to do so."

"Thanks, my good friend. Let's to yon wine shop, and while we discuss a flagon, we will likewise, discuss this business."

"*Bueno, señor.* 'Twas for that same *bodega* I was making when you charged me and brought me to a stand; for I must confess me a thirsty mortal at all times, saints' days and Sundays included."

Seated in the wine shop, nothing was said until a deep draught of strong Catalan wine had allayed Rodrigo's thirst; then, setting down his flagon and eyeing it with a regretful air, he said, "Now, *señor*, if you will be pleased to unfold this same delicate matter of which you spoke, being in a measure," eyeing the flagon again, "prepared and fortified, I will do whatsoe'er I may to advise—nay, it becometh not such as I am to make offer of advice to your *señoria*—but can I do aught, whether it be of fighting or otherwise, methinks you have already had proof of my willingness to serve you."

The *señor* Hernandez made no immediate response to this speech, but seemed lost in thought, and Rodrigo, thinking he had not heard him, or hearing, had not understood, spoke again.

"You know, *señor*," he said, "how much I

owe you—of a verity, something more than life itself—and—”

“*Basta, amigo,*” interrupted the cavalier; “that debt was canceled long ago.”

“Nath’less, *señor*, I hold me bound to you in any case, be it for life or for death.”

“As thou wilt, Rodrigo. But at the present ’tis but a matter of guardianship with which I would invest thee during mine own absence from Seville.”

“Guardianship, your *señoria?*” repeated Rodrigo, inquiringly.

“Aye. Being about to depart on a journey of some length and duration, I would fain have a trusty friend here in Seville to keep a watchful eye on a certain *señorita*”—Rodrigo lifted his heavy eyebrows in a significant way, but said nothing—“and see that no harm befall her, as had well nigh chanced a short while agone.”

“And this *señorita*, *señor*; I presume she is to be kept in ignorance of the matter; in other words, I am to play the spy. ’Tis an office I like not, but—”

“Nay, nay,” hastily interposed the cavalier, “thou mistakest my import. The *señorita* is to know that she hath a friend close at hand on whom she can depend in case of need; she is my betrothed, Rodrigo.”

The soldier smiled, and when he did so the wrinkles ran up to his eyes like ripples of merriment.

"So that hath befallen your señoría which, sooner or later, befalleth the most of men," he said. "You have been tripped up by a farthingale. But that's only as it should be; a noble cavalier of your presence should ne'er go through the world like a shaven monk."

"Then thou art no advocate of celibacy, Rodrigo?"

"Nay, señor—wherefore should I be? For what was woman created, if not to be the mate of man?"

"And yet thou hast ne'er found a mate for thyself, *amigo*."

"Ah, there you bring the matter home to me, señoría. But, marry! the fault lyeth not with me. Three times have I been i' the trap, and there would have stayed most willingly, had not the hussies, after emptying my pouch of every stiver that was in it, bade me begone and return no more."

"Truly, fortune hath not favored thee in affairs of love, Rodrigo," said the cavalier, laughing.

"Nor war," said Rodrigo. "It hath ever been my luck, when I have hewn a way through the ranks of the foe, to have some spriggald step up afore me and enter the breach, thereby winning the guerdon to which I was justly entitled. And you know but for the timely aid of your señoría I should e'en now be the slave of the Algerine, a malediction on his turbaned head!"

"*Certes*, fortune hath used thee ill," said Don

Julio, "but despair not, *amigo*; thou may'st win her smiles yet, and then will she repay thee with double measure for all that thou hast lost."

"An' she do, I will be naught less than a captain-general, *señor*. But now, as concerneth this same *doncella*, the fortunate betrothed of your *señoria*! How chanceth it that she should need the guardianship of a rude soldier like me? Hath she no kinsman in Seville, or is it from them she hath aught to fear?"

"She hath no kindred in the city," replied the cavalier, "save her old grandfather, and he, being a Jew, can scarce afford her such protection as she may stand in need of."

"A Jew, *señor*?" said Rodrigo, suddenly becoming serious.

The cavalier noticed the change in his companion's countenance, and knew full well the cause of it.

"I should not have said a Jew, Rodrigo," he responded, "for Jew he cannot be and live in Spain, as you know; but he cometh of the stock of Abraham, though he was baptized into Holy Church when he was a child."

"Ay," said Rodrigo; "but let me tell your *señorita*, an' you know it not already, one of that stock is ever a Jew; baptize him, an' you will, with water as hot as hell itself, and still will you have a Jew—naught but a Jew."

"Methinks thou art over-rigorous in thy judgment, Rodrigo," said Don Julio.

"Nay, señor, craving your pardon. I have had to do with your Jew and I know him well; of a truth I like him not, be he Christian Jew or Hebrew Jew."

"Then will I be obligated to seek further for the friend I need to serve me."

"Nay! nay!" exclaimed the soldier, "'twas not my purpose you should take me in that way, señor. I consider not the Jew a jot in this affair. I but gave you my opinion of his kind—and I would serve you were the devil himself at t'other end."

"Then there is nothing more to be done save to make thee known to the señorita, and I will explain that 'tis to thee she must look in case of any foul machinations 'gainst her honor."

"But what hath she to fear, señor, and from whom?"

"That I did purpose telling thee another time, but, an' thou be not already aweary of my affairs, I will e'en do so now."

"Aweary, señor; and wherefore should I be aweary? Did we not come to this same *bodega* to discuss your affairs? And here have we not been discussing mine own as much as your señorita's? There's but one thing we've not discussed, methinks, and that's this same good wine; for, *por Baco!* one draught may scarce be called a discussion."

The cavalier called the wine-boy, and when the flagons were refilled, he told the man-at-

arms of his rencounter with the ruffians in the wood.

“And you heard not the name of the count for whom this villainy was undertaken, señor?”

“Nay, the knaves called him not by name. Had they done so, of a verity I had sought him out and brought him to an accounting. I might have forced a confession from the villain I had at my mercy, but I thought not on it at the time.”

“ ‘Tis well as it is,” said Rodrigo, “for be he a noble of high degree, as most like he is, he would have flouted your challenge; and, had you forced the fight upon him, his retainers would have slain you. But these knaves whom you encountered, señor—perchance you noted somewhat about one or both, some distinguishing mark by which I might recognize them.”

“Ay, truly,” replied the cavalier, “one of them would be a notable figure anywhere. He is of tall, lank stature, and is as swarthy as a Moor. His face, never a handsome one, I trow, is ornamented with a cicatrice that reacheth from the right eye to the corner of his mouth, giving this last feature the look of being excessively large and twisted around in most ludicrous fashion.”

“I have known just such a man as him you describe, señor; but then, there be enough tall, lank fellows going; and as for cicatrices, there is a plentiful harvest of them in these times, as

your señoría knoweth full well. Heard you not the name of this same rascal?"

"Ay. His companion did call him Jacqueton —Captain Jacqueton."

"Jacqueton!" repeated Rodrigo, bringing his hand down with a thump on the table. "'Tis the very man, señor, though he was no captain when I knew him. He was always more of a braggart than fighter, and he got his cicatrice at the hands of a harlot, who slashed him with a barber's razor."

"And what wilt thou do, now that thou knowest the man, Rodrigo?"

"I'll search him out, señor, be he still about Seville, and learn who 'tis employeth him and his comrade; then, methinks, when I know the master as well as the man, 'twill be my own fault an' I cannot outwit them."

The cavalier made no rejoinder, but remained for some moments lost in thought, while the man-at-arms drained his flagon, by short stages, to the very lees; then, "Why not take service with this nobleman when thou hast discovered him, Rodrigo?" he said.

"Of a verity, 'tis well considered, your señoría," was the reply, "and a marvel 'tis I had not the wit to have thought on't; but 'twould seem the man whose work is always of the hand hath ever a dull head. I'll do it, señor; trust me, I'll do it, though the wage be naught other than food and drink."

"I thank thee, *amigo*," said the cavalier, rising; "and now let us seek the *señorita* Antonia; the caravel on which I am to sail is almost ready to leave her moorings, and 'twill be as well to have these little matters settled at once."

"Caravel!" repeated Rodrigo, stopping short as they were about to pass out of the wine-shop. "Did your *señoria* say caravel?"

"Ay," replied Don Julio. "Seest thou not yon little ship with the gay flags already flying bravely at her peaks?" pointing to *La Esperanza*. "'Tis of her I speak."

"Ah, a fine little ship is she, truly, *señor*," said the soldier, following with his eyes the direction indicated by the other's finger; "much like the one on which we had well-nigh met with misadventure at Lepanto. But what of her?"

"I am her *capitan commandante*, *amigo*, and soon will she be speeding over the stormy seas to that new western world where wealth and fame await him who hath the hardihood to come and pluck them."

The listener stood for a little while like one dumfounded, and then he broke forth in a voice full of lamentation.

"*O buenos Dios!*" he exclaimed, "said I not that fortune hath ever been against me? Now what better proof of it want I than this? Here have I made oath—or as good as done so—to stay in Seville as guardian of a *doncella*—bound me nurse, as it were, to a Jew's granddaughter—

when there was a fine little ship waiting, right under my fool's nose, to take me to the Indies an' I only had had the wit to know it."

There was so much of a certain kind of humor in all this that the cavalier could scarce keep from laughing. But he knew Rodrigo was in serious earnest, and said sympathetically: "It seemeth hard indeed, *amigo*, and gladly would I have thee with me, were't not that thou canst serve me better here."

"Ay, *señor*," replied the other, dolefully, "I doubt it not, and I blame not your *señoria*. 'Tis fate—naught but my curst fate. O, my good mother, why wert thou such a niggard? Why was I not born twins? Then might I have served my lord in the Indies and my lady in Seville at one and the same time. But heed not my ravings, *señor*," apologetically. "'Tis but the reaction, as I may say, that, like the wind from a cannon ball flying close to one's head, hath scattered what little wits I had and made me a fit subject for bedlam."

The *señor* Hernandez said nothing, and as they pursued their way, the soldier's rage at what he termed his "curst fate" somewhat cooled.

"After all," he said, assuming a jocular tone, "what thought had I of going to the Indies an hour ago, or even of seeing your *señoria*? I came to Seville to pass away some idle days and enjoy myself, and no sooner have I entered well into the town than I am promoted to the guard-

ianship of a beautiful doncella. What greater honor can I ask? Nay, I will shut my eyes to all else, and make the most of that which hath fallen to my lot. *Adios!*" and kissing his hand he waved it to and fro theatrically as though he bade farewell to the universe.

CHAPTER XIII.

In the pateo, over against the wall of one wing of Beneberak's house, where a stately palm spread its waving fronds, a pavilion of cotton cloth, woven in stripes of brilliant colors after the Moorish fashion, was stretched. In the shadow of its folds stood a table of rare wood and curious workmanship, on which were set baskets of embossed silver, heaped with luscious figs, purple grapes, golden oranges and ruby-grained pomegranates, delicate porcelain dishes filled with cakes and confections, and crystal flasks of amber-colored wine, accompanied by wine-glasses so finely cut that they would have been almost invisible but for the sharp lights reflected on their circular rims and fragile thread-like stems.

This was a love-feast prepared by Antonia for her lover, who was to depart with the eventide. Standing a little way off the maiden viewed her arrangements with critical eye and smiling lip, then turning toward a row of offices used by the servants of the household she called, "Judit Judit!"

Almost immediately a little Moorish maid came forth and hastened toward her.

"Now, child," said the mistress, pointing to the

pavilion, "what thinkest thou of it? Is't worthy of my lord?"

"O, *señora dona!*!" exclaimed the girl, her eyes shining with delight, "'tis beautiful—'tis perfect—and worthy of any he, though he be the greatest in all Spain."

"And so he is, *boboncella*, saving alone the king," said the maiden, proudly. "But 'tis not perfect—nay. Bring hither yon Syrian rose: its dark green leaves and pyramid of blush-pink blooms will fitly crown the feast—perfect the symmetry o' it, as thou shalt presently see."

The Syrian rose, dwarfed by being potted but thrifty and well set with blooms, was brought and placed in the midst of the rich array of fruits and gleaming silver and flashing glass—truly crowning the feast—"perfecting the symmetry o' it," as Antonia had said—and then mistress and maid stood back and looked at the *ensemble*.

"Prithee, lass, what thinkest thou now?" asked the one.

The other clapped her small, brown hands, but spoke only with her bright, black eyes.

"'Tis well. Now begone, and when thou hear-est the silver bell then come again and not be-fore."

The girl gave her mistress a knowing look and ran away. There were two chairs, similar in ma-terial and workmanship to the table, within the pavilion, and on one of these Antonia seated her-self to await the arrival of her guest. Still as the

sunshine that lay on the tessellated pavement of the court, with hands loosely clasped in her lap, and eyes downcast, she sat listening for the sound of his footsteps; and when the firm, martial tread struck the tympanum of her ear her heart leaped in response to it, her color deepened and spread upward to the forehead—a glow of rosy light that slowly faded out again, leaving two burning spots on her cheeks.

She lifted her eyes as she rose to receive him, and drew a deep breath when he clasped her in his arms.

“*Amadora*,” he said, “have I tarried long?”

“Long, señor,” she murmured. “It ever seemeth long to me when thou art away.”

“Ah, pity, then, it is that we should part at all.”

“Why should we part?” she asked. “Why shouldst thou tempt the raging sea—the savage men and creatures of an unknown land?”

“What wouldst thou, love? Wouldst have me prove recreant to my plighted word?”

She made no reply, but withdrew herself from his arms and resumed her seat, when placing the other chair near to hers he sat down and took one of her hands in his.

“*Amor mia*,” he said, “knowest thou what it is to a poor soldier of fortune to have a ship like *La Esperanza* given him to go whither he will in search of that fame so dear to his heart?”

“I can understand,” she said, with a sigh.

“Alas! fame is the successful rival of love: in pursuit of it man forgetteth the breaking heart he hath left behind; each day bringeth some new excitement to distract him—the howling wind, the dashing waves, the crashing thunder, all combine to turn his thoughts away from her who loveth him above all other things on earth.”

“Nay, nay, Antonia,” he said, taking her in his arms again and drawing her to him.

“Ah, my lord,” she continued, laying her head on his shoulder and looking up in his face with eyes full of a beseeching melancholy, “I have loved thee since first these eyes were blest with the sight of thee. ’Tis long, señor. Rememberest thou how long?”

“Ay,” replied Don Julio, gazing down at her with a look of wonder, “but then thou wert a child, *amada*.”

“A child with the heart of a woman,” said Antonia. “I did appear a child to thee, I doubt not, and thou didst forget me ere the tears I shed to see thee fading from my sight were dry; but I forgot not thee. Oh! my lord! my love!” she cried passionately, throwing her arms up around his neck, “leave me not here to die, for I shall surely die when thou art gone.”

“What wouldest thou, Antonia?” he asked, with a troubled look. “Wouldst have me break my compact with the señor Murillo? He hath put great trust in me, and now should I be-

tray that trust—now, when all is ready for the venture—what would he think and I deserve?"

"Ah no, my lord," said the girl, withdrawing her eyes from his and half hiding her face in the folds of his jerkin, "thou hast mistook the import of my words. I would not have thee break thy compact, and shouldst thou do it thou wouldst not be the hero of my dreams. 'Twas but a foolish, selfish whim that did prompt the thought."

"What wouldst thou, then?"

"Let me go with thee. Oh, my lord, deny me not. I'll ne'er complain of hardships, ne'er be afeared of Ocean in his angriest mood, and when the battle rages I will follow thee e'en to the jaws of grimdest death."

"Wouldst thou all this for love?" he asked, turning her face up so as to look into her eyes.

"Ay," she replied, "and more. I'd be thy willing slave though thou shouldst spurn me, and follow thee like a cringing dog thou didst despise, only to kiss thy feet when thou didst sleep; and shouldst thou fall I'd yield mine own spirit up, the last sigh on my lips a prayer for thee, though my soul should perish for lack of penitent word."

This utter abnegation was something entirely new in the señor Hernandez' experience, and he was scarcely prepared to understand it. The throne of his heart was divided between love and ambition. Fame was the rival of love, as An-

tonia had said, and time and circumstances could only prove which would occupy the first place; but here was one to whom love was all—heaven and earth—and hell.

“Antonia,” he said, “tis a marvel to me, this love of thine.”

“Wherefore, my lord.”

“It seemeth not reasonable that any man should deserve so rich a gift.”

“Deserve! What hath deserving to do with love? I deserve not to be loved by thee—yet am I loved by thee—am I not, my lord?”

“Ay, thou knowest full well I love thee, without need that I should tell thee so.”

“I know it, yes, and yet ’tis sweet to hear thee say it. But come, thou canst not put me off with words. I asked a boon—that boon is love—nay, life itself—and thou hast neither answered yea nor nay, which signifieth to me live or die.”

“Nay, say not so, *amada*,” said the cavalier.

“Tis true, my lord.”

“Thou thinkest so now, I doubt not; but love like thine will make thee live for him thou lovest, though he be far away.”

“Far away?” she repeated, plaintively. “Ah no, not far away, for I will be with thee.”

“Nay, love, it may not be; it were not fitting one like thee should consort with rude men-at-arms, many of them ruffians, whose sole thought is of rapine, and slaughter, whose ordinary speech would scare thy gentle soul.”

"Oh, my lord, and are thy comrades such?"

"For the most part, ay, though there be some of better sort. It is my part to curb these turbulent spirits—to control and guide them, as the wise head controleth and guideth the body, that otherwise would go astray and waste its energies in futile endeavor."

Antonia said no more, but lay in her lover's arms, softly sobbing. The soul that battle nor tempest could affright shrunk trembling from contact with rough, licentious men. After a little she lifted her head, and rising to her feet picked up the crystal flask. "My lord," she said, pouring wine into two of the wine-glasses, "the feast I have prepared for thee is yet untouched. Wilt drink to *La Esperanza*?"

"Ay, sweetheart, and to thee, likewise," replied the cavalier; but before he could lift the glass to his lips Beneberak entered the pateo and came toward them. He set it down without touching it to his lips, and, rising, turned to the master of the house.

"I crave your pardon *señor caballero*," said Beneberak; "I have here your letter of instructions, and 'twould be as well that we look over it together in case there should be aught requiring explanation."

The two men seated themselves, the elder opening the paper that he held in his hand, and

Antonia, whose eyes were still full of tears, which she chose to hide from her grandfather, retreated to the house, leaving them alone.

The pavilion had been so set against the wall that just one lower corner of a window overgrown with vines came within it, and when the attention of the old man and his guest was fully absorbed in the contents of the paper they were perusing, a hand was thrust through the interlacing vines without disturbing a leaf and extended over the table. It was a thin, colorless hand, and held between the index finger and the thumb a tiny vial, from the lips of which fell drops—one, two, three—of a clear liquid into the wine-glass at Don Julio Hernandez' elbow. Then this ghostly hand was withdrawn as noiselessly as it had appeared.

Antonia returned just as her grandfather, who had not remarked her absence, was about to withdraw.

“Stay, *señor*,” said Don Julio. “When you came in we were about to drink to *La Esperanza*—a prosperous voyage and quick return; now doubtless you will join us in this libation.”

“Assuredly, *señor caballero*, an’ it be your pleasure,” replied Beneberak, and the *señor Hernandez*, taking the glass already filled with wine—the one into which the drops had fallen from the vial—placed it in front of him and proceeded to fill another for himself.

The flask was in his hand when a fragment of stone—it might have been a bit of the facing or sill of the window—fell, striking the glass intended for the old man, breaking it and spilling the contents.

“Ah!” exclaimed Antonia, turning pale, “’tis an evil omen.”

“Tut tut,” said Beneberak, eyeing the place whence the missile had come suspiciously; “an accident the like of which doth happen every day. A bit of loosened stone hath upset a glass of wine. ’Tis naught to fright thee, wench.”

Nevertheless, he hastily quitted the pavilion and entering the house made his way quickly to an unused chamber in the rear of it.

His sharp eyes made a searching survey of the place, but saw nothing save a few decrepit pieces of furniture, which had been stored there as being no longer fit for use, and he was going out again, when his glance fell on a bit of vellum lying curled up on the floor. This he picked up and going nearer the window—but without making the least noise—spread it out in his hand. There were some Italian words written on it in a very fine hand—one that he knew well.

The words were “*Acqua della morte: tempo: sei mese*”—and Beneberak would have understood them even had he been unacquainted with the Italian language—“Water of death: time: six months”—a subtle poison, with the length of

time one might expect to live after swallowing a few drops of it indicated in the last two words.

“Fool!” he muttered—that was all—and, thrusting the bit of vellum in his bosom, he left the room.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE NEW WORLD.

Filled with rage at his utter defeat by the unfortunate girl who had so resolutely defended her honor, Rossi retreated to his own chamber, adjoining the one occupied by his prisoner, and dressed the wound so ignominiously received as best he could. Then he went out to cool his hot blood in the evening air that came in soft breaths from the sea. The men were gathered around the camp-fires preparing their suppers of coarse food, but he felt no desire to eat and, instead of going among them, wandered off to the river. A sentinel challenged him and, after giving the password, he stood and talked to the man.

“Hast ever been stationed on the lookout, Felipe?” he asked, pointing to the great pine tree, which stood a little further up the stream.

“Ay, *señor*,” replied Felipe, “and I care not to be there again.”

“Wherefore, prithee?”

“Well, you see, *señor*, 'tis a windy sort of place at all times, and the night I was there 'twas blowing harder than usual. Methought I should

take a flight, and *caramba!* I am not an angel with wings yet, nor am I a kite."

"I know not," said Rossi, measuring the tree, which stood like a great black shadow against the evening sky, with his eye. "I know not how it may be, never having tried it, but it seemeth to me I should like to be perched away up there, seeing all and yet unseen, like those creatures who are said to hover about us and observe all we do."

"What creatures, *señor?*" asked the soldier in a troubled voice; for the least hint of the supernatural would transform the bravest soldier of that time into a coward.

"There are such creatures", replied Rossi. "We see them not, but they see us and note all we do; and 'tis said they favor some and assist them in their labors."

"Ah, yes, *los duendes,*" said Felipe, in a tone of relief, "but they harm not them who anger them not."

"Who is stationed in the tree at the present?" asked Rossi.

"Sancho Pinto, a mariner, *señor*, and it seemeth a fitting post for him and his mates: they be more at home up in the sky, as it were, than we poor landsmen, who like a bit of solid ground under our feet."

"Tis true enough, what thou sayest, Felipe, yet, for once, methinks I'd like to see how the earth doth look from up there."

"Bleak enough at night," said the soldier, laughing, "and far enough away. Na'th'less, 'tis but a score or so of steps straight upward, an' you be inclined to take them, *señor*; though, in that case 'twere as well to leave your sword with me or it may chance to get between your legs, and, like an unruly steed, fetch you down with more speed than will be to your liking or comfort."

The Italian unbuckled his sword belt, and handing the weapon to Felipe, bade him take care of it until his return. He then went to the foot of the tree and began to ascend it. At first it was easy enough, and he went upward with confidence; but the further he got from the ground the more he felt that he was out of his element, and the greater care he bestowed on his handhold and footing. When he had accomplished a little more than half his journey he stopped and ventured to look down. He appeared to be hanging over a black abyss. It made his head whirl, and a sense of helplessness took possession of him. He clung with greater tenacity to the frail supports on which his safety depended, and had it not been that the sentinel below knew of his purpose he would have descended without having accomplished it. But Rossi was no coward—simply experiencing sensations such as any brave man might experience if placed in a novel situation to which was attached a certain amount of peril—and in a little

while he became calm, conquering his nervous trepidations by force of will, and climbed up until he reached the great branches of the tree. Then he stopped, for these seemed to present an insurmountable barrier to his further progress.

"Who cometh there?" cried the man above.

"*El commandante*," was the reply. "How got you into that devil's nest, *amigo*?"

"There," said Pinto, reaching down, "take my hand, *señor*, and I'll help you. But 'tis no devil's nest, I warrant you," when the Italian stood beside him, "and methinks the devil would scarce soar so high: his game is down there, not up here so close to heaven and all the saints."

Rossi stood, holding fast to one of the branches of the tree looking down at the earth beneath him. It was a clear starlight night and the river, with the marshy islands lying in the midst, looked like a great embossed shield of burnished steel. For the rest, all was black, as Felipe had said it would be, with the smouldering camp-fires glowing here and there. The men had finished their evening meal and gone to their quarters, whence the murmur of their voices could be heard rising, like the drone of belated bees.

"I have been thinking, Pinto," he said, after a while, "that the getting up here, difficult as it was to me, who am unaccustomed to climbing, was much easier than the getting down will be."

"Let not that disturb your *señoria*," replied the

sailor. "Whenever you get aweary of my company, and desire to go below, I can assist you with the rope that we used to hoist the fagots."

"Ah, 'tis well; then will I stay with thee awhile, for 'tis a pleasant place, notwithstanding Felipe did somewhat disparage it."

"And what said Felipe, *señor*?"

"Only that 'twas no fitting roost for a landsman. He feared the wind would blow him away the night he was here."

Sancho laughed.

"Ay," he said, "I remember me 'twas a boisterous night, and glad enough he was when the relief came, which was no other than myself. He was assigned to the post in the room of my comrade, Mateo Crispo, who was affected with some malady of the head, and of a consequence did not dare venture so far from the earth, where a man must have all his parts under proper discipline, and more especially his head, that, being any way disordered, doth swim 'i' the air,' and bring the poor body, which can only swim i' the water, to the ground with a thump that knocketh the life out o' it."

"Truly methinks the head needs must be a clear one that passeth much time in this eyrie," said Rossi. "But tell me, Sancho, how dost amuse thyself during the long hours of thy watch? For that thou art true to thy charge and sleepest not on thy post, I doubt not."

"I ne'er so much as permit me to wink, *señor*;

for full well I know should the savages get into the camp my case would be anything but a pleasant one, let what might chance to the rest. As for amusement, a man may be merry without other aid than his own fancy. Now sometimes I sing, but more frequently I hold discourse with myself."

"Discourse with thyself?"

"Ay, *señoria*, and a very tolerable boon companion do I find me. Though there may be times when discussion leadeth to argument, and argument to hot words, we never come to blows. No, no, señor, we be good friends, myself and me, take us day in and day out, and ne'er let a little difference of opinion make bad blood between us."

"Certes, a fortunate circumstance," said Rossi, falling in with his companion's humor, "since, perforce, you must be so much together. Boon companions are not always wont to keep on such good terms: a trifling matter will oft send them at each other's throats."

"Methinks there is little chance of my proper self and my other self coming to that, *señor*," replied Sancho, laughing, "unless we be seized with the curse of madness."

Just then there was a flapping of wings and a rustling in the pinetop above, as if some huge bird were settling itself to rest.

"What's that?" asked the Italian, "*Sapristi!* it surely cannot be the wind rising."

"Nay, 'tis not the wind," replied the sailor; "'tis a friend of mine, *señor*, who cometh oft to visit me. He hath a fine voice, and presently shall you hear him sing."

The man had scarcely ceased speaking when there was a snapping sound, like the gnashing of teeth, and then a wild, prolonged shriek, followed by the usual cry of the great horned owl—"Ou! ou! ouah! ouah! ouah!"

"Santa Maria!" cried Rossi, "'tis the ill-omened bird. Scare it away! Sancho, scare it away! an' thou wouldest not ill luck should befall thee!"

"*Cuerpo de San Antonia!*" exclaimed Pinto, "doth the beast bring one ill luck?"

"Of a verity it doth."

"Then will I kill it," grasping his arquebuse and blowing the fusee, which shone like a single red eye in the darkness.

"Nay, slay it not," interposed the Italian, laying his hand on the weapon; "the creature is a demon, and though thou shouldest slay it and flay it, it would avail thee not."

"What can we do, then, *señor*?"

"Frighten it away."

But the owl flew away of its own accord, and Pinto, remembering what he had said about the bird, smote his breast and cried out: "*Mé peccado!* what have I done? The saints be good to me. Fool that I am, I have called the devil my friend." Then he went on to bewail his folly, but the only

consolation he got from Rossi was a long dissertation on demonology—weird tales of black devils and blue, who, entering the bodies of the dumb animals familiar to man, made life a prolonged misery to such poor wretches as offended them, or a succession of delights to such as made friends of them, only to carry them off in a mighty whirlwind, or great smoke, in the end. The Italian continued talking in this vein until he had exhausted his *répertoire* of fiends of divers hues and accomplishments, and then fell asleep on a pile of moss his companion had spread for his comfort, leaving that simple mariner to think over the strange tales he had heard—tales that fascinated while they terrified him.

He had been asleep about two hours when Pinto roused him, and as soon as he had recovered from the mental confusion consequent upon awaking in so strange a situation, directed his attention to a small black object floating in the midst of the steely sheen of the river.

“And didst thou disturb me for that?” he asked, fretfully, as one will speak when roused from sleep for some trivial cause. “‘Tis but a log floating in the water.”

“Nay, *señor*, craving your pardon; ‘tis no log—‘tis some living creature.”

“How canst thou know that?”

“I know the tide is on the ebb at this hour, and it floateth not with the tide: ‘tis moving toward the marshes yonder.”

"Then 'tis a crocodile."

"I will shoot it, an' you say so, *señor*," said Pinto, taking his gun in hand again.

"Nay, thou art too ready with thine arquebuse," replied Rossi. "The crocodile was worshiped by the Egyptians as a god, but, like all the gods of the heathen, 'tis, in very truth, a devil."

"Marry!" said Sancho, "the creature hath more the semblance of the devil than of God, I trow, or even one of his saints."

While they were yet discussing the character of the thing they were watching it disappeared, and at the same time there arose from the sea the same melodious sounds they had heard once before. As before, the sad refrain increased in volume as it rose, passed around the camp, and gradually died away.

"*Santo Cristo!*" cried Rossi, rising to his feet, "the very air of these regions is peopled with demons."

"Ay, *señor*," responded Pinto, "in good sooth, it doth so appear, and pity 'tis the holy father Bartolome was washed off the galleon. With a prayer or two he had made these knaves sing another tune, I trow; but I doubt me an' there be a man among us all now who hath enough of the stuff in him that goeth to the making of a monk, not to say a priest, to do aught with them."

The *commandante* said no more on the subject; but after a few minutes spent in meditation, told

the sailor he would descend and return to his quarters.

"What!" said the man, "and leave me here, *señor*, to fall a prey to the foul fiend?"

"Hast thou ever suffered aught of harm from him?" asked Rossi.

"No, *señor*, not as yet," was the reply, "but there's no telling when he may take it into his horny pate to pitch me out of this infernal roost."

"Make thee a cross of two of these fagots, and with that thou canst defy Satan and all his host."

"I doubt it not, *señor*; but then your *señoria* must know that one loveth good Christian company when the devil is riding by his door, and may chance to step in and inquire after his health."

"It grieveth me to leave thee, good Sancho," said the Italian, "but I have duties below, as thou must know, and may not neglect them. But come, I will stay with thee until thou hast made thee a cross, and with that for thy weapon of defence thou needst fear naught."

With a sailor's deftness whenever the handling of ropes and tying of knots is concerned, Sancho soon made a rude cross, and that done, assisted Rossi to descend from his aerial station with an alacrity that seemed unaccountable, after his recent protest, until, having waited a sufficient length of time to permit his commanding officer to get well away, he quietly slipped down to the foot of the tree himself.

"Here will I abide until my comrade cometh to relieve me," he said, sitting down on the ground. "I, for one, have no fancy to encounter the devil where he will have me at disadvantage, and the cross, methinks, though a good weapon in the hands of a priest, who hath been indoctrinated in the use of it, would be of little avail to a poor mariner like me, who knoweth naught save of tarred ropes and such gear."

CHAPTER XV.

Having reclaimed his sword, Rossi returned to his quarters and laid down to rest, but not to sleep. To the man whose spirit is as perturbed as was his sleep cometh not; and, besides this, the wound inflicted by the Indian woman had become inflamed, and was very painful. So he passed the remaining hours of darkness tossing restlessly on his couch of moss and cursing the red witch who had bitten him. He had given up all idea of conquering the repugnance of Nawatonah, and while cursing her, conceived a diabolical project by means of which he might be sufficiently avenged for the torture and humiliation from which he was suffering.

Now that what he had called his love was changed into hate, her death alone would content him, death accompanied by its greatest agony—death at the stake.

He had but to charge her with being a witch and the thing was done, for in those days to be accused of witchcraft was to be condemned with or without proof. With his thoughts intent on this purpose, he arose at early dawn, and went forth to seek his chief counselor, Gonzales.

The maiden day was dressed in gorgeous robes, and her sweet breath, laden with the perfume of the pine, seasoned with the salty savor of the sea, was like a draught of life's elixir, and he stopped to inhale it with delight, for even the man that hath murder in his heart can enjoy the blessings which the Creator provides for his creatures. Verily He "maketh the rain to fall on the just and the unjust, and the sun to shine on the evil as well as the good."

"Your *señoria* hath met with an accident," said Gonzales, when the Captain and his lieutenant had passed the customary salutations of the morning.

"Ay," replied Rossi, wincing when he spoke, "I had the misfortune in the darkness of the night to strike my face against the door of my quarters."

A curious smile just lifted the heavy drooping moustache of the Spaniard, but the Italian, without appearing to notice it, continued:

"I knew not," he said, "that a mere abrasion of the skin, could produce so painful a wound."

"You should have come to me, *señor*, and I would have dressed it for you," said Gonzales. "Like most old soldiers, I am somewhat of a chirurgeon, and can even lop off a limb on occasion. A sharp blade to do the job, and a bit of hot iron to stop the flow of blood—that's about all the mystery there is in it."

"Ah, well, 'tis naught—a trifle," replied Rossi,

anxious to turn the conversation into some other channel, "scarce worth so much consideration."

"Ay, a mere scratch, doubtless," responded the other, "that will heal of itself in a sennight, or even less time. Had it been a bite now—the bite of some beast—it had been more difficult. There is ever more or less poison in a bite—ay, e'en in the bite of man or woman—and your wench is the very devil for biting, when you light the fires of her temper."

Rossi looked at his companion a moment as if he were trying to read his inmost thoughts. Did the man know how he got his hurt, or were his words just chance words that happened to fit the occasion? However it might be, the soldier's rugged countenance gave no sign that he could interpret one way or the other.

"Pablo," he said, after his fruitless scrutiny, "there is a little matter concerning the prisoner we have in durance yonder," pointing in the direction of his own quarters.

"We, *señor*?" interrupted the lieutenant. "Nay, not we, craving your pardon. I at least have naught to do with her. I am too old to waste my wits on women whom I have ever found value themselves a good *pieza* more than their desert. 'Ah, *señor*, when we grow old, and they grow old likewise, then do we arrive at their true worth. Your crone who weareth a cherry countenance hath a good heart, but too oft the honey-words and sweet smiles of youth and beauty are

but masks to hide the mischief that in old age stingeth with the tongue, like an adder."

"Thou seemst to be somewhat of a philosopher, Pablo."

"The man that hath lived in this world beyond sixty years must needs be a philosopher or a fool."

"Thinkest thou so?"

"Of a verity, *señor*. Look you now, when a man hath lived to that age he hath had full forty years or more of wholesome experience, and if he know not the world and its ways then, why he must be a fool; if he know the world and its ways, then must he be a philosopher, for there be no deeper philosophy, I trow, than a knowledge of mankind—unless it be a knowledge of womankind.—But to return to your *señoria's* affairs, what of this woman—this Indian wench?"

Rossi was silent a few minutes, and then he said:

"Yesternight 'twas nigh about the hour of twelve, methinks—didst hear a strange sound i' the air? 'Twas like a mournful chorus sung by many voices, and once before hath it visited our camp."

"I heard it, *señor*, but gave little heed to it. 'Twas only a sound, when all's said and done—a grawsome one, 'tis true; but there's naught in a sound that a man should dread it, an' it be not the sound of a shrew's voice."

"They say 'tis the death song of this maiden's people, who, doubtless possessed, like the swine of old, went down into the sea. She alone was left, and now, by practices of witchcraft, she bringeth them back to torment the living."

"Whom do they torment, *señor*? Not me, I trow. I've seen and heard too much in my time to be troubled by such shallow mysteries."

"But if the woman be a witch, Pablo?"

"What then—the stake? The bird is yours, *señor*, and it importeth not to me what disposition you make of it. You may cage it or cook it—it is all one to Pablo Gonzales, who hath helped sack too many towns to care for the squeals of a wench more than for those of a stuck pig. But let us go and see this witch," and the two went toward Rossi's quarters.

When they drew near, Gonzales stopped and uttered an exclamation. "Look!" he said, pointing to the little house. "Methinks your bird hath flown to the woods, *señor*, or your witch to the moon."

The Italian rushed to the door of Nawatonah's prison and threw it open. "*Maladetta strega!*" he cried, perceiving what had happened, "she is gone! *Figlia del Inferno!* she hath escaped! It was she whom we saw in the water."

"Whom you saw in the water? What mean you, *señor*?"

Rossi related his experience in the lookout,

expressing regret that he had forbidden Pinto to shoot at the fugitive.

"Umph," grunted Gonzales, "it would not so much matter, seeing 'twas only a woman running away from us, did it not show a lax state of discipline. If one woman can slip out so easily, why may not one man—or ten—get in. It must be looked into, *señor*; these fellows must be told to keep their eyes open, and not permit aught floating in the river to escape them. There is danger from that direction, and unless we take good heed we shall all be awaked some night with our huts in a blaze over our heads."

"Thou art i' the right, Pablo, thou art i' the right," said Rossi, "and the sooner thou dost caution the men the better; for, now that the girl hath got away, I doubt not we shall hear from her friends ere long. An angry woman letteth not the fire of wrath die out until her vengeance is appeased."

Rossi was not mistaken. The following night, near the third hour, the man on the lookout saw several dark objects in the river. He watched them a few minutes, and perceived that although they were apparently floating with the tide they gradually approached the shore. Every now and then those furthest out would disappear, sinking beneath the water, to reappear on the surface in advance of all the others somewhat after the manner in which a flock of birds go hopping over

each other as they feed on the ground, only in an inverse order.

There was no need to speculate as to the character of these floating objects or the purpose of their strange maneuvers, and the man, raising his arquebuse to his shoulder, fired at the nearest. Every head—they were human heads—sunk beneath the surface of the stream at the sound of the explosion, and the next instant the mellow notes of the bugle sounded the call to arms. The last strain had barely died away when the camp was filled with the subdued noise made by men when they turn out in the night to repel the attack of a foe.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE OLD WORLD.

Antonia sat dreamily looking into the patio. The flowers, drenched with recent rains, were just beginning to hold up their drooping heads, to court the warm kiss of the sun that, breaking through the clouds which for several days had obscured the sky, poured floods of glory over the beautiful, old Moorish city, making minaret and tower, cupola and arch, glisten as though they were inlaid with burnished gold.

Her eyes were fixed on the flowers, but she saw them not; she saw the dark ocean, with its huge billows rising and falling, bearing away a little bark that seemed like a toy that they played with; she saw dense forests of great trees, beneath whose sombre shadows fierce wild-men awaited, with eager, blood-thirsting eyes, the landing of the crew of the little bark; she saw a deadly conflict raging—white men and dark men mingling in a confused mass, with shouts and cries and the clashing of weapons—one form, the only one in all that struggling, writhing host which had interest for her, ever in the hottest of the fight.

She arose, with a sigh that was almost a sob, passed a hand across her eyes with a gesture of impatience, as if she would sweep away something that troubled her soul, and turned to leave the room. As she did so she stopped short and drew herself up to her full height.

It was evident that she made a strong effort to subdue the emotions that had filled her eyes with tears and brought the sobbing sigh to her lips.

Standing just within the room, in an attitude intended to express a certain amount of humility, was a young man, who, somewhat taller than the average of men, had a remarkably handsome face of Jewish cast. "I crave your pardon, *señorita*," he said, his fine, black eyes regarding her with a look of bold admiration by no means consistent with the humble position he had assumed; "tis scarcely my place to advise—perchance you may deem me guilty of unwarrantable presumption—but—" Here he hesitated, and she waited without saying a word, fixing upon him a steady, inquiring gaze, which seemed to embarrass him.

"I crave your pardon," he repeated, "for—for intruding—" He stopped again.

"Go on!" she said. "You have something to say to me. What is it? Speak! Hath aught gone wrong that you dare not tell my grandfather?"

She sat down again, but did not ask him to sit.

"*Señorita*," he said, "you know full well the great interest—the—the—"

"Stop!" she cried, sharply. "I told you long ago that any interest or other feeling you might have for me was without warrant, and concerned me not."

"Ay," he said, in a tone in which there was a strange mingling of sorrow and sarcasm, "I am only a poor Jew; I had not the good fortune to be born a Spanish cavalier."

"That you are a Jew," she said, "giveth no offence to me, as you know. My grandfather is a Jew, and I am half a Jew myself, therefore it would ill become me to scorn the race. Of a verity, the Jew hath much reason to be proud of the stock from which he is sprung."

"And yet the *señorita* would give herself, body and soul, to the Spaniard."

"What question is there of Spaniard or Jew between you and me?" she asked, with an angry flush.

"Nay," he replied, waxing bolder, "truly there is no question of Spaniard or Jew, but of honest love that I, the Jew, offer you, and a vile dishonest passion with which the Spaniard insults you."

For a moment she was so astounded by the man's audacity that she sat perfectly still and said not a word, then she slowly rose to her feet, the fire of wrath blazing up in her eyes with almost savage fierceness.

"How dare you!" she cried. "You, a menial in this house—how dare you intrude upon my privacy to insult me thus?"

"Man dareth much—dareth everything for love," he answered. Then, suddenly returning to his former attitude of humility and clasping his hands together, "O *señorita*," he cried, "spurn me, if you will, but first hear me!"

"Nay, nay," she said, hastily, "speak not another word! You can but add insult to insult, and I will not hear you. Begone! Leave me!"

But he did not stir. He stood looking at her, unable to conceal his admiration, though he knew he but added fuel to the fire he had kindled. She was wonderfully beautiful in her wrath.

"You scorn me and my love," he said, "and give all to the Spaniard, who despiseth the race to which we belong."

She opened her lips as if to protest, but said nothing, and he went on.

"Ah, *señorita*, think you that one of his race can love one who hath a drop of Hebrew blood in her veins? An' you do you are greatly deceived. The proud Spaniard loveth not the outcast, and the children of Israel are outcasts—you among them, though, as you have said, you are but half a Jew."

"What availeth all this?" she asked, "and what know you of my concerns, which should be naught to you who taketh it upon yourself to give me counsel?"

"I know much," he replied, "and have taken upon me to give you counsel because the old man, your grandfather, seemeth to be blind. I

know that you have been in the arms of a libertine—that your lips have been polluted by the kisses of a light o' love."

The color flushed hot into her cheeks, and she seemed about to interrupt him, but restrained herself.

"The señor Hernandez," he continued, "is betrothed to a lady of high degree in this same city of Seville. You were to him but a plaything of the hour."

For a moment she stood like one turned to stone, the color left her cheeks, and was succeeded by a death-like paleness. Though she did not believe what he said, the very idea his words conveyed, was a shock to her innocence. Then her eyes flashed, a bright red spot gathering on each cheek.

"Ah!" she said, with a gasp, "what a poor, pitiful thing is a liar. Begone! and offend not my sight again by your presence," and she pointed to the door through which he had entered the room.

With a low bow and a cynical smile he left her.

"Ah, my beautiful Judith," he muttered to himself, as he went back to the office where his duty, as Beneberak's clerk, lay, "the Christ in whom thou dost put thy trust once told a tale of a sower, whose seed fell in many places; and some came up and flourished, and others, having come up, wilted for lack of soil, and died, and some

came not up at all. The seed I have sown this day will be of those that came up and flourished. 'Tis but a little thing—a mere speck, which thou, in the pride of thy beauty, dost treat with scorn, but 'twill sprout and grow, and bear the fruit of jealousy; and the taste of it shall be as bitter as aloes, and it shall poison thy life, and then?—and then?—ah, we shall see."

Left alone, Antonia resumed her seat, and, woman-like, gave vent to her feelings in tears.

A few days later the young clerk was standing in the gateway of the patio, which opened into a narrow, little-used street, when he saw a woman dressed in fantastical rags coming toward him.

"Ha!" he said, "the gitana, I will speak to her. Good Morrow, mother!" when the woman came nearer.

"Good yester e'en, young sir," replied the gypsy, sarcastically, "but methinks thou hast mistook our kinship; I never yet gave birth to a Jew."

"How knowest thou that I am a Jew?"

"Marry, one hath but to look i' the face o' thee to know that. But e'en though thou didst not bear the mark of Abram so plainly on thy countenance still would I know thee for a Jew, for thou art of the household of old Beneberak. Some call him Murillo and believe him to be a Christian, but thou'dst make a singing bird of a magpie by calling it a nightingale as soon as turn a Jew into a Christian by calling him out of

his own name. He hath a daughter—a handsome wench, as thou art a handsome knave—why dost thou not wed her, and ask me to dance at the wedding feast? I can dance, old though I be."

" 'Tis of her that I would speak with thee."

"Ay? And wherefore dost not speak with herself? Hast the faint heart in despite o' thy fine looks?"

"Nay, 'tis not that, but she'll not list to me."

"Then how can I help thee?"

"Hast thou not some philter that, being given to one, will turn the heart to the one who giveth it?"

"Ay, I have such philter, but I fear me I'll not dance at thy wedding if 'tis to that thou dost trust. 'Tis a charm for kings and princes, man—the same that Sheba put i' the sop of Solomon, the king, and that the Egyptian flavored Mark Antony's wine withal. 'Tis a drug of great price."

"What dost thou call a great price? A gold ducat, perchance."

"And dost thou value the wench at one gold ducat?" cried the gitana, with a laugh of derision.

"Twould pleasure her to know it, I trow. Ha! ha! the Jew liketh not to part with his money—nay, not e'en for love o' the flesh."

The young man's face turned red, and there was an angry light in his eyes.

"Speak lower, woman," he said. "Wouldst have the whole city hear thee?"

"The city hath its own concerns to mind, and troubleth not itself with thee or me," she replied.

"Yet there is no reason why thou shouldst cry out the matter as if 'twere some jest."

"And is't not a jest?"

"Nay, truly; 'tis matter of serious import."

"Marry, come then, let's to business. What wouldst thou?"

"I would know, in all earnestness, the price of this same drug that thou sayest is so potent."

"In all earnestness, then, young sir, for five ducats will I furnish thee with enough of this same drug as will suffice to serve thee once, an' thou fail'st to profit by it the loss be thine."

"Sapriste!" exclaimed the youth, " 'tis as precious as the elixir of life."

" 'Tis more precious," said the woman, "for what is life without love? And said I not 'twas a charm for kings and princes?"

"Wilt thou warrant its efficacy?"

"Nay, I will warrant nothing. The formula by which 'tis prepared hath been handed down in our tribe sith the days of the Ramessu, and the simples of which 'tis compounded are obtained through toil and dangers that no ordinary mortal would dare encounter. If that be not enough for thee without further warranty, then go thy ways."

"When wilt thou fetch me this elixir, an' I be willing to pay thy price for't?"

"One sennight from this day will I deliver it unto thee."

"For five gold ducats?"

"Ay, for five gold ducats. But thou must give me earnest money, as a guaranty that thou wilt keep to thy bargain."

The young Jew turned his back on the woman, and thrusting his hand in his bosom drew out a leather purse, from which he extracted a piece of money, that, facing her again, he handed to her.

"Ho, ho!" she laughed, mockingly, while she gazed at the shining coin as it lay in her open palm. "Your Jew knave liketh not that the world should know what money he hath in his pouch, and therein is he wiser than your Christian fool, who, when he hath got a little gear together, runneth about cackling, like a hen that hath laid one egg—'Clalack! clalack! I have riches! I have riches!' that the whole world may know it."

"This day sennight, at this same hour, will I await thee here," said her companion, provoked at the clamor she made, and anxious, now that the bargain was struck, to be rid of her.

"I'll not fail thee," she replied, "and I know thou'l not fail me," holding up her prize between the finger and thumb and then hiding it somewhere among the folds of her dress, "and even if thou dost I'll be the richer by a gold

ducat. *Adios, señor.* The god of love smile on thee."

"*Adios,*" he repeated, entering the patio and closing the gate as she moved away.

When she heard the gate shut to she turned her face to it again and made a curious gesture with her left hand.

"Ah," she said, "thou art a fine cockerel for a Jew, but a fool withal, and, I doubt me, a wicked fool. But what saith the wise one? 'The fool's wickedness shall compass his own undoing.' "

CHAPTER XVII.

"Thou art too quiet, girl, too quiet," said Beneberak. "It pleaseth me not to see thee so still; 'tis not thy natural bent. Thou wast wont to be ever gadding—thee and thy dog—too much, methought, but it made the roses blossom in thy cheek, and so I never hindered thee. Now that thou ne'er goest abroad, thy cheeks have lost their fullness and their bloom, and thou art no longer the merry wench thou wert."

"'Tis my humor to stay at home," replied Antonia. "I like not the glare o' the sun and the noise o' the streets."

"Tut, tut, thou art a silly pate. What avail-eth it to sit moping the day long? Get thee out with thy dog! The beast, weary of waiting for thee, hath ta'en to following me, and, though I like not dogs running at my heels, I suffer it. He looketh up in my face so ruefully that I can-not find it in my heart to forbid him, knowing that he loveth thee."

The girl looked at her grandfather with eyes glistening with tears.

"Ah, how I have misjudged you, dear grandfather," she said. "I thought not you were so soft of heart."

"Chut, child," Beneberak replied, a little testily, "must a man be soft of heart because he doth not kick the whining beast that cometh in his way? Thou know'st little an' thou thinkest so. There be men who would deny a starving child a crust and throw it to some pampered cur that chanced to have won his favor; whose horses are better housed than half the poor wretches whose toil hath made the provender on which they feed. A man may have a heart of flint and yet caress a dog or horse that is his own; 'tis part of his vanity, nothing more. But take thy dog Carlos and get thee abroad; I like not the complexion of death on the face of the living—'tis unnatural."

Carlos, who had been lying disconsolate in a corner, pining for the love he seemed to have lost, roused by the sound of his name, got up, and going to his mistress, laid his head in her lap and looked up in her face with his brown, wistful eyes, slowly wagging his tail, as if he were uncertain whether his advances would be kindly received or repulsed.

"Dear Carlos," said the maiden, patting him gently on the head, "poor dog; in my selfishness I have been cruel to thee. Come, let us go for a stroll by the river, and thou shalt refresh thyself with a bath."

She arose and adjusted her mantilla, and the dog leaping up tried to lick her face and then rolled over and over at her feet.

“ ‘Tis well,” said the old man. “Get thee gone at once! A stroll by the river or in the Alameda will do thee good. But go not without the city gates, girl. Remember what befell thee once owing to thy imprudent habit of wandering in solitary places.”

“Fear not,” replied Antonia. “The lesson hath not been forgot, nor is’t like to be soon,” and when her grandfather had left her, she added, “nor what good fortune did come to me with it. O mysterious fate! that led me into the greatest peril of my life that I might find its richest blessing.”

Avoiding the more frequented streets Antonia, wending a narrow thoroughfare which she knew would conduct her quickly to the river, was accosted by a man-at-arms.

She looked at him with straight, fearless gaze, but without recognition.

“Your *señoria* doth not remember me,” he said.

“Stay,” said the maiden, putting forth her hand with that gesture of laying hold on something about to escape us, so common under such circumstances, “stay! Ah, now I recall thy face. Thou art Rodrigo. But ‘tis scarcely strange that I did not quickly know thee, Rodrigo, since I ne’er saw thee but once before.”

“Nay, *señorita*, ‘tis scarcely strange, as you say; but it hath been through no fault of mine that you have seen so little of me. I have been con-

strained to remain in the country all this time, and have but just returned to Seville."

"I hold thee not blameworthy, Rodrigo," said Antonia. "The *señor* Hernandez gave me to know that thou wouldest seek employment in or near the city, and one who entereth the service of another cannot be his own master."

"'Tis as you say, *señorita*," replied the soldier; "yet nath'less, had circumstances permitted I had called to see how you fared. 'Tis this way with me, you perceive: the lord with whom I took service seemed to think that my health or my morals would be endangered in this same good city of Seville, and kept me so employed that I had ne'er a chance to put my nose inside the city walls."

"And how cometh it that thou art now in Seville?" asked Antonia.

"I am a free man once more, having quitted the service of my lord, and go whithersoever it doth please me to go. I like not to serve them who think with their gold they buy a man's soul as well as his body."

"There be such, I know; and thou hast done well, methinks. I trust thou wilt find service more to thy liking here in Seville."

"Whether I do or no, here will I stay," said Rodrigo. "But e'en now was I on the way to seek your *señoria*. Methought but to stop at yon bodega for a sup of wine, for, craving your pardon, I am consumed of a mighty thirst. You can have no notion how campaigning doth in-

crease the natural thirst of man, *señorita*—and here are we fortunately met.”

“Fortunately met,” repeated Antonia. “Yes, for I am glad to see thee, Rodrigo, and—and if I can assist thee—in living whilst thou art out of employment, I mean—”

“Nay, nay, *señorita*,” hastily interrupted Rodrigo, “twould ill become one like me to go a begging of you.”

“But it would not be begging—oh, no, I meant not that, my good friend.”

“Thanks, many thanks,” said the soldier, “and I’ll consider it as ‘tis meant, but a few pieces go a long way with me, and I’ve not been so improvident a spendthrift as to squander all my wage.”

“It pleaseth me to know thou art so discreet,” said Antonia, “and now that thou art come to Seville to abide I trust to see thee oft. Now, I fear me, I have already kept thee standing here too long; so go, good Rodrigo, and quench thy mighty thirst. I would not for a prince’s ransom thou shouldst suffer longer from so great a drouth on my account.”

She said this with a whimsical smile on her lips as she turned to resume her walk, and left the soldier protesting that no wine could cheer the heart as could one look at her sweet face.

“Think’st thou so?” said a voice behind him, and facing about quickly he confronted a gitana. “And, prithee, what would the *señor* Her-

nandez think an' he saw her discoursing so sweetly with a man-at-arms in 'the service of the greatest libertine in Spain?"

"He'd think no ill, mother," replied Rodrigo; "for the *señor* Hernandez knoweth Rodrigo Sanchez too well to doubt his honesty, whomsoever he may chance to serve."

"Perchance he doth place his trust wisely—I'll not gainsay it—but one judgeth the man by the company he keepeth, the servant by the master he serveth."

"And right eno', I do allow. But, let me tell thee, an' *el señor conde* be what thou sayest he is—"

"*Vaya amigo!*" cried the gypsy, interrupting him, "thou knowest full well what *el señor conde* is, and thou canst not lie, even by implication—thy face betrayeth thee. By that same sign know I, likewise, that Rodrigo Sanchez is the honest man he doth profess to be; for the man who cannot face his own lie is no rogue. But come, as thou art an honest man, tell me, what did impel thee to take service with *el conde*?"

"*Caramba!*" exclaimed the soldier, "meat and drink, for what else should one man serve another?"

"Bah! thou couldst as easily have earned meat and drink among honest men, like thyself, as in the company of rogues, such as the count keepeth about him."

“*Cuernos del diablo!*” said the soldier, speaking with some exhibition of vexation, “thou art as keen at cross-question as the doctors of Salamanca. What are my affairs or my motives to thee?”

“Naught, an’ they cannot bear the light of day,” said the gypsy, turning away abruptly and leaving him.

“Hump!” said the soldier, looking after her, “wherefore doth the woman seek to pry into my affairs, and how hath my lord, the count, offended her? She is not comely now, whate’er she may have been in times past. But, then, the count is no boy. Hm—hm!”

Antonia having reached a place where the river’s bank sloped with a gentle inclination, employed herself throwing bits of wood into the water for Carlos to swim after. The dog appeared to enjoy the sport much more than his mistress did, for he jumped about and barked with eager excitement, while she performed her part with a listless, uninterested air.

At last, with a sigh of weariness, she sat down under an ancient olive tree that grew there, and the dog, swimming ashore, laid his prize at her feet, shook the water from his long hair—surrounding himself with a circle of sparkling drops and tiny rainbows—and stood in front of her, looking in her face with shining eyes, wagging his tail, and seeming to invite her to take up the gage once more. Just then the gypsy drew near.

"You rest in the shadow of the olive, lady," she said, "and the olive is the symbol of peace."

Antonia looked at her with surprise, for she had not noticed her approach.

"The symbol would be more apt," she said, "did not those lands where the olive flourisheth produce men of fierce natures and fiery tempers, who are ne'er content to rest in peace."

"You say rightly," replied the gypsy, "but the symbol hath its significance nath'less: to you, who sitteth in its shadow now, it signifieth peace and prosperity. Shall I tell your fortune, lady?"

"As thou wilt," said the girl, extending her palm for the woman's inspection, "but I warn thee I have no faith, neither in signs nor palmistry."

"Believe you not that there are those who can look into the future and tell the fate of others by signs and symbols known only to them?"

"The future is in the hands of the good God, and man knoweth naught of it save what it hath pleased Him to make known through His prophets."

"Then you care not to hear aught of the brave young cavalier who hath left you to seek fame and fortune in the new world?" said the gypsy, looking at the palm still held out before her.

"Nay, say on, good woman," replied Antonia; "the question is not whether I shall hear, but what I shall believe."

"I see," said the woman, "a meeting by running water; 'twas the first."

"Now thou speakest of the past, not of the future," said the maiden.

"The past, the present and the future are closely knit the one with the other. Years went by—one, two, three—and he, the young soldier, crossed your path again, and this time he left you not so quickly, and not until his heart was won; but he left you in spite of the pleadings of love, and followed in the track of the dove; but like the dove of Noe, he shall return and then there will be joy for you and him. But, in the mean time," pretending to study the palm of the girl's hand more closely, "there is a rival."

Antonia, who had listened with indifference thus far, started at the mention of a rival.

"Ha!" said the gypsy, "doth that touch you, *señorita*? Know you that the cavalier hath a rival? You may not believe in my science—you think me an impostor, perchance—but the poor gitana warns you to beware of this rival; he hath much cunning and little conscience."

"I said not thou wert an impostor," replied Antonia. "I doubt not thy sincerity, but to me what thou believest to be a science seemeth a folly."

"Ah, *señorita*," said the gypsy, "you are unlike all other ladies I know; there is not one but would have asked me more questions than I could well have answered and never doubted

the truth of what I should tell them. Would that I could read the stars, as a certain seer of my tribe can; then would you harken to me, for you can scarce doubt the claims of that science which readeth fate in the shining page of heaven."

Antonia made no answer. Though she lived in an age of gross superstitions, the influence of which was felt in the prince's palace as in the peasant's hovel, hers was not a mind to be easily imposed on by vulgar soothsayers and fortunetellers. And although she might have some faith in astrology, practiced, as it was at that time, by men of learning and reputed wisdom, she was not ready to credit the assertions of every pretender who might claim to possess a knowledge of the science—if science it may be called in these days, when the true science, astronomy, is taking such astonishing flights, even surpassing in the wonders of actual discovery the pretended marvelous revelations of her bastard sister, whose professors never dreamed how far the truth transcended their fanciful imaginings.

Carlos, who was getting tired of waiting for some notice from his mistress, now began to show signs of displeasure, in the way that dogs are usually wont to manifest that feeling.

"Your dog regardeth me with an evil eye, *señorita*," said the gypsy. "I fear me he will give me a taste of his teeth an' I stand here chattering longer."

"Down, Carlos!" said the maiden, and the dog laid down, but continued to mutter his disapproval of so long a conference, in which he was not included. "He will not bite thee; he is impatient to begin play again, but I have no mind to indulge him."

"He will be better content when I am gone, at any rate," said the gypsy, "so I will go my ways; 'tis better to please e'en a dog than to displease it. *Adios, señorita.*"

"Stay!" cried Antonia, rising, and thrusting her hand in a pouch of ornamented leather that she wore at her girdle—she took from it a piece of money, which she gave to the woman. "There," she said, "that may serve thee when thou art sick. Or perchance thou hast others dependent on thee, and I know that life is hard to such as thee."

"You say truly," replied the gypsy, "and may the good God, in whom we both believe, bless you."

"And you likewise," responded the girl.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE NEW WORLD.

The Spanish force was numerically small, but, by scattering his men in squads and singly along his line of defence, Rossi managed to cover it all and make quite a show of strength. Of course there was danger of a weak battle-line like this being broken by the savages, but the white men were all armed with arquebuses, which, clumsy weapons though they were, they handled with considerable celerity, and besides these each man carried one of those short swords that had been found so effective at close quarters in the many wars engaged in by Spain during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and during which her soldiers had become renowned throughout Europe.

The two small cannon, as we already know, were so placed that one commanded the approach by land and the other the waterway, and to serve them a sufficient number of experienced artillerists—bombardiers they were then called—had been detailed.

The whole arrangement was a simple line of skirmishers, extending across the point and along the river, supported by two pieces of ar-

tillery, and Rossi's orders were, whenever the enemy should make his appearance, to keep up a rapid fusilade. The men were numbered and were instructed to fire by file—that is, every other man, beginning with the even numbers, discharging his piece, the others holding their fire in reserve until the first had reloaded, and in case the attack should be concentrated on any particular point the odd numbers were to quit their posts and rally to repel assaults, thus leaving some, though at greater intervals, along the line of fortification.

When the lookout man had fired his arquebuse his bullet had taken effect in one of the heads in the river, though not the one he had aimed at, and when the swimmers arose to the surface of the water again, which they did a considerable distance further off, they were one less than their original number.

Rossi went to the base of the tree, and hailing the man, asked why he had given the alarm. Being told, and getting some idea as to the direction in which the Indians were, he ordered the gunner who had charge of the falconet to lower his piece and send a ball after them.

The roar of the gun broke on the stillness of the night like a clap of thunder, and the ball went ricochetting across the water, doing no harm to the savages, 'tis true, but filling them with consternation and making them hasten to take refuge in the marshes.

The Italian was too wise to imagine that this would be the end. He believed it was only the prelude to a general attack, and his military sagacity led him to guess pretty accurately the plans of the enemy. As we shall see, this foresight enabled him to use his little force to the best advantage.

The object of the band of aquatic adventurers had been to make a landing unobserved within the entrenchments, and, this accomplished, lie in concealment until the war whoops of the main body of their dusky comrades should warn them that the assault in front had begun, when they were to support the attack by falling upon the rear of the white men.

Had this movement been successful it would certainly have proved fatal to the Spaniards, but the ease with which Nawahtonah had slipped out of the camp had made them wary, and an order had been promulgated to fire at any object seen floating in the river. So the attempt had failed, and the commandant, with good reason, concluded there was nothing further to fear from that direction, and drew off a part of the men stationed along the water front to strengthen his force at the entrenchments, which he had no doubt would soon have to sustain a heavy assault.

Half an hour elapsed and there was no sign of any enemy without, and the less wise among the men were beginning to grumble at being

kept from their rest unnecessarily, as they thought, when Gonzales called the attention of his superior to something crawling along on the ground at no very great distance from the works.

The space between these and the forest was covered with little clumps of palmetto, which in the sweep of sand appeared at night like many islands in a dim grey sea. Rossi had wanted the men to clear these away, well knowing they would prove a good cover for a cunning foe, but, with the recklessness of soldiers who have a contempt for the adversary they are dealing with, they had refused to do more than clear a space about one hundred feet wide in the immediate front and he had permitted them to have their way rather than run the risk of another mutiny.

The object Gonzales pointed out disappeared the minute after among the palmettos.

“What was it, thinkst thou?” asked Rossi.

“Twas a man, *señor*,” was the reply, “and I doubt me, there be more of his kind out there.”

“Methinks thou art right, Pablo,” said the other. “Go thou and see that the men are in order of battle and ready for the conflict, and when thou hast performed thine office take charge of the right. I will remain here with the centre. Leandro Mendez, a brave soldier and a trustworthy, hath the left, as thou knowest.”

When he thought his lieutenant had had sufficient time to carry out his instructions Rossi told one of the men standing near him to fire into the

clump of palmetto where the dark, crawling form had disappeared.

The report of the arquebuse was followed by a wonderful scenic transformation in front of the Spanish fortified camp. The space, before as silent as the chambers of death, where not a living creature stirred, became in an instant a pandemonium, filled with raging, yelling demons.

Sending a flight of arrows whistling about the ears of the Spaniards, some of whom were seriously wounded, the savages made a general rush forward. Then the clear, ringing tenor voice of Rossi was heard: "Steady, men-at-arms; fire!" and there was a crash of report. The enemy halted, still yelling and shrieking, when another volley was poured into them, the falconet adding its thundering voice to the chorus of small arms.

When an army, whether civilized or savage, is checked in its onward career, it takes but little to send it flying backward, a terrified, demoralized herd. Recoiling before this second discharge of iron hail, which cruelly tore their naked bodies, the Indians turned and fled to the forest, managing, however, even in their panic, to carry with them their comrades who had fallen, both the slain and the wounded. A detachment of soldiers that, after the dawn of day, ventured out on a scouting expedition, failed to find a single dead or wounded man, though the field of battle was strewn with bows and arrows, tomahawks

and war clubs. A splotch of blood here and there, trampled into the sand by many feet, and staining it a dark brown red, showed where a warrior had yielded up his soul, and that was all there was to prove that their balls had taken effect upon the bodies of men.

The soldiers had gathered some of the abandoned weapons, to preserve as trophies, and were about to retire, when a flight of arrows whizzing by them and rattling against their armors warned them that the enemy had only retreated to cover, and hastened their return to camp.

One of the men was pierced through the calf of his leg, but the others were unharmed, and all succeeded in getting safely back within the entrenchments, the wounded man assisted by his comrades.

During the day the garrison, with the exception of the regular guard, slept and rested. The savages lurked in the woods, seldom showing themselves, and then only for an instant, disappearing again so quickly that it would have taken a keen marksman, with a much better weapon than the arquebuse, to have hit one of them; so the Spaniards wisely refrained from wasting their ammunition.

Several days passed in this way, the savages, who had evidently established a regular siege, occasionally sending a flight of arrows into the camp, but for the most part making no active demonstrations. The white men, being tried sol-

diers, accustomed to the many stratagems of war, were not deceived by this quiescence, but remained on the alert.

On the fourth day after the conflict at the dusky twilight hour a little oak bough, thickly covered with leaves, was seen floating down the river with the tide, which had just turned, and was flowing out. At any other time it would have passed without attracting any notice, but the Spaniards were suspicious of every little circumstance out of the usual course, and this little bunch of leaves claimed the special attention of the guard. There being a standing order to shoot at anything floating in the river, it became a target for each sentinel as it went by his post, and the men shouted to each other in terms of approval whenever a particularly good shot was made, laughing loud and long at one or two that went wide of the mark. But the mark itself remained untouched, some of the bullets striking the water in front and *ricochetting* over it, and others flying to one side or the other.

The soldiers laughed and jested with each other for having expended their ammunition to no purpose, and the little oak bough floated on until it reached the sound, when the current or wind carried it towards the beach, where it was lost to the sight of them who had been firing at it.

Along the sea beach no sentinels were stationed, the earthworks having been so con-

structed as to bring the soldier on the last post down to the water's edge, whence he could see along the whole stretch of white sand to the mouth of the river. This man, who had been wondering what was amiss, saw the object of the fusillade when it floated out into the sound and watched it until it seemed to get aground in some shallow place, where it remained stationary, when, shrugging his shoulders, he resumed his march back and forth on his beat. In a little while twilight deepened into night and then a strange thing happened.

Had the man on the lookout thought it worth his while to watch that little cluster of leaves—it was still visible from his post, as a dark spot on the face of the shining waters—he would have perceived that it slowly approached the shore. It floated towards some black stumps that stood midway between the high-water and low-water lines, and were at the time partially submerged. It moved as under the pressure of a gentle breeze, until at last it became entangled among these stumps.

As soon as this happened a dark figure, perfectly naked, came out of the water—like a great fish that had chosen to leave its natural element—and crawling over the sand until it reached that which was above tide water, and consequently dry, rolled over and over, covering itself from head to foot, as with a white powder.

The Indian who had thus by a cunning stratagem gained a footing in the camp was not distinguishable now from the beach on which he lay stretched at full length, except on very close inspection, and he remained perfectly still, feeling that he ran no risk of being discovered save by some one passing within a few feet of him, and for such an emergency he was prepared.

This warrior was Thicsico, who burned to be avenged for the brutal wrongs and insults to which his betrothed had been subjected. He had chosen for his undertaking the hour of dusk, when the Spaniards could see just sufficiently well to distinguish the actual character of any object floating in the river, without being able to discover if there were anything concealed under it. Breaking a bough thickly covered with leaves from a recently fallen oak, he had swum with it into the middle of the stream some distance above the camp, and concealing his head in it, had lain quite still in the water, allowing himself to drift down with the current. When the soldiers had begun firing, sinking the full length of his arm, and holding his buoy lightly with the hand, he had safely passed the principal danger he had had to encounter during his short voyage. Once in the sound he had but to strike out for the shallows and then gradually approach the shore, swimming, wading, crawling, without exposing his body to view, and still keeping his head concealed among the leaves.

The soldier pacing his beat cast a glance along the strip of white sand whenever he came to the water's edge, but saw nothing; and the warrior, who had managed with a scarcely perceptible movement of his body to bury himself, never stirred; waiting and watching with indomitable patience for the hour which should bring him into the presence of the enemy he sought.

At midnight the guard was relieved and the Indian, hearing the voice of the subordinate in charge giving instructions to the man he had brought to take the place of the one on the last post, thought a party of soldiers was coming his way. Taking a firmer grip of the tomahawk that he held in his hand, he half arose, looked searchingly around, flitted like a shadow up the sloping bank and disappeared.

The commandante had gone to his quarters early in the evening, leaving orders that he should be called two hours after the midnight watch was set in case he did not make his appearance before that time. Laying aside his steel cuirass and casque, he stretched himself on his rude couch and was soon sleeping heavily, as a man fatigued usually sleeps. But soldiers engaged in active warfare, accustomed to be aroused at any moment, are peculiarly sensitive, and awake often from the deepest slumber of their own accord at the hour appointed for them to mount guard or in the moment of danger. So the Italian awoke

fully a half-hour before the time he had appointed to be called—awoke with a shuddering sense of impending evil. He didn't stop to speculate as to the nature or cause of the sensation that possessed him; but, rising, stepped softly across the little chamber to the corner, where he had deposited his arms before lying down.

As he reached over to lift them from the floor his ears caught a curious muffled sound, like that which a bat makes when it flits by in the darkness, and instinctively turning his head he looked towards the narrow opening that had been left in the wall for a window. There he saw a remarkable silhouette. In the frame formed by the window appeared the head and shoulders of a man, a black profile against the starlit sky, which served as a light background to the simple but significant picture, significant because from the top of the head arose the scalp lock of an Indian warrior, and above the head was lifted a hand grasping a tomahawk, ready to strike a death blow. For an instant held, as by some fascinating power, Rossi gazed at this apparition without moving. He felt as though he were about to witness his own murder, for the Indian stood over the bed he had just quitted. It was like a flash of revelation to him, as if he saw a picture of fate in a magic glass. But only for the shortest possible space of time did this feeling of duality hold possession of him, and with awaking consciousness of the true situation came

quick and unhesitating action. Unencumbered by his armor, it was no extraordinary feat for him, with one leap, to reach his would-be assassin and seize him by the throat; and the impulse to do this came so strongly and instantly upon him that he did not even think to first secure his poniard, which was lying within easy reach of his hand.

The Indian was not prepared for an attack like this, and went down with scarcely more resistance than would have been made by any inanimate object, the light and wiry Italian on top of him clutching his throat with a grip that meant death by suffocation if he did not soon free himself of his assailant.

Rossi had also caught him by the wrist of his right arm, and still held on to it, but his situation was desperate, and with his left hand, which was free, he managed to loosen the grasp on his throat enough to allow him to breathe. He was the heavier and stronger man of the two, and though he could not wrench his right arm away from the nervous fingers that clasped it, succeeded in rolling over and bringing his antagonist on the floor alongside of him. Then, letting go the hand at his throat, at the risk of being strangled, he felt about for the tomahawk that had fallen from his grasp at the first onslaught of his foe.

The white man knew very well what the red one was doing, but did not try to hinder him.

He just tightened his grip on the throat, knowing that to a man suffocating a weapon of any sort is of little use.

Neither combatant uttered a sound, but carried on the deadly conflict in silence. To the Indian it would have been difficult under existing conditions to have given vent to even one of those peculiar grunts which the American aborigines usually utter in lieu of exclamations, but the Italian knew he could make his voice heard in every part of the camp did he choose to call for assistance. He did not do so because his pride was piqued to conquer his adversary alone; to lead him forth a captive—his captive—the evidence of his personal prowess. Such a consummation would have secured for him the respect which is always accorded great valor, and he was ready to risk his life on the chance, so anxious was he to impress his followers with his high, soldierly qualities.

But he was not able to keep his grip on the other's throat sufficiently tight to utterly disable him, and there was a long struggle, during which the combatants constantly shifted their positions, sometimes the Italian being uppermost, sometimes the Indian, until both men were weary, and as by mutual consent lay still, breathing hard, the Indian for the time being having the advantage. Just then the report of an arquebuse was

heard—another, and then the mellow voice of the bugle calling to arms.

The Indian seemed to comprehend the meaning of these signals, and strove, with all his might, to get away, but his enemy held him fast, and in the fearful fight that ensued his hand came in contact with the weapon he had so long groped for. With an exulting, half articulate cry, he clutched it, and at that moment a soldier, with a lighted torch in his hand, rushed into the room. The new comer stood for the instant stock still, gazing on the scene disclosed to him. Thicseco lifted his hand to strike the blow that was to set him free, but before it descended something flashed across the prostrate forms and hand and weapon fell to the floor.

While Rossi and the soldier who had come so opportunely to the rescue were securing their prisoner they could hear the crash of combat progressing all along the line of entrenchments, volleys discharged from the arquebuses in quick succession mingled with the yells of savages, and an occasional roar of the falconet, in which all other sounds were momentarily lost. There was need for haste, and the latter proposed to dispatch the captive with one blow of his sword; but to this the officer objected, and so the unhappy Indian was bound and thrust into the chamber in which Nanatonah had been confined, not that the Italian had any feeling of compas-

sion, but because the speedy death of the enemy who had sought to destroy him would by no means satisfy the thirst for vengeance that raged in his heart.

CHAPTER XIX.

The commandante arrived on the scene of conflict none too soon. Gonzales was a good lieutenant, but he could not be everywhere at one and the same time. He had sent the messenger to summon his chief as soon as the alarm was given, and had been wondering why he did not come, when his presence was so much needed.

The savages had opened the attack by making a feint in force on the front, while a band of picked warriors had silently gathered on the beach, out of sight of the fortifications, and waded out into the shallow waters of the sound, designing to flank the works and fall upon the rear of the Spaniards.

The plan was well conceived, but, unfortunately for them the man stationed on the lookout was one of the most vigilant and trustworthy in the camp, and with restless glance, constantly roving from point to point, as far as he could see, he soon discovered a dark mass moving slowly over the face of the water. At first he wondered what it was, and then, like an inspiration, the truth flashed upon him. He shouted to those below, but received no answer. Amid the din of battle

it was impossible to make himself heard, so, descending from his aerial station, he hastened in search of the *commandante*.

He found Rossi and Gonzales consulting together, there being just then a temporary lull in the storm, the Indians having suddenly withdrawn to cover, and made his report.

“Aha!” said Gonzales, “that doth account for this sudden retreat to the woods. They’ll not show their shaven pates again until their comrades have had time to reach the shore, and then will they up and at us like ten thousand devils. ‘Tis a bad outlook, *señor*, but, *caramba!* we must e’en make the best of it.”

“Ay,” responded Rossi, “’tis as thou sayest, Pablo; but, with the help of Saint Iago we will foil them. Go thou to meet this flanking party! Take twenty good men and true, and the falconet now standing idle in the redoubt by the river, and I doubt not we shall hear a good report of thee, an’ we be not all with the blessed saints ere dawn.”

“There be some among us whom the saints will scarce stand surety for, *señor*,” said Gonzales, with a laugh. “Nath’less, we can but do what we may, and let the issue rest with saints or devils, which e’er shall claim us. So, *adios* or *adiablos*, as the case may be.”

“*Adios*,” said Rossi, to whom, because of his superstition, not of his Christian virtues, the

irreverent talk of his reckless follower was very distasteful.

Gonzales quickly got his men together and they dragged the falconet across the sand to the point where it was needed, when, stationing his little band in solid phalanx around it on the brow of the slight acclivity which forms a sort of rim to the basin of the sound, the lieutenant went down to the water's edge, and, squatting so that his eye could skim the liquid surface, awaited the approach of the enemy.

Thieseco was, as we know, a prisoner. What he had undertaken was, first, to slay the officer in command and then set fire to the cabins, which being built of very inflammable materials, would have been in a blaze almost as soon as the torch was applied to them. But the conflagration—the means for which he expected to find in the smouldering camp fires—was not to be started until the grand assault by land and sea began, when, in the general consternation and confusion, the savages expected to win an easy victory and wreak an ample revenge.

The band of warriors engaged in the flank movement entering the sound half a mile to the westward of the fortifications, and wading out several hundred yards from the shore—a thing easily done when the tide was low—had turned to the eastward and continued their difficult march until arrived opposite the camp, when, believing their manoeuvre had been unobserved,

they turned their faces landward and pressed confidently forward. When they were within fifty yards of the shore the chiefs called a halt. They were awaiting a renewal of the conflict in the front, and the warriors stood in the shallow water grinding the sand with their feet, not daring to demonstrate their impatience in any other way. They little dreamed there were eager eyes watching them, and only waiting for them to come nearer in order that their destruction should be the more certain and complete.

A quarter of an hour passed and then the dead silence that had fallen on the night was broken by a terrific crash—as if two great globes of steel had come together and burst asunder—followed by a demoniac chorus of yells, shrieks and whoops from a thousand savage throats. Immediately the Indians in the water began to move forward, silently, swiftly, and in a dense mass.

Volley succeeded volley along the line of intrenchments, and still they came on, until they were almost on the beach.

“Steady, comrades,” shouted Gonzales. “One, two, fire!”

Had one of those huge meteors that sometimes rush athwart the sky fallen in their midst the savages could not have been more panic stricken than they were when the Spaniards sent their messengers of death among them. Some fell dead on the spot; others, losing complete control of themselves, though they were brave men,

turned and fled like frightened deer, while many, shattered, torn and bleeding, dragged themselves out into the dark and dismal waste to die. But a goodly number still stood their ground.

The Spaniards, having had time to reload their pieces during the confusion and uncertainty that followed their first discharge, stood awaiting orders and the warriors who had not fallen or fled, after hesitating a little, made a desperate dash to climb the sandy slope. Again the word **was** given, and again the arquebuses poured destruction into their midst. The cannon requiring more time to reload, was not ready for this second volley or there had been few of the brave fellows left to continue the struggle. As it was a third of their number went down. But those who were left never faltered nor stopped, and the soldiers, throwing aside their arquebuses, drew their swords.

So greatly outnumbered were they even now, after so much slaughter, that it seemed as though the white men must speedily be annihilated, but discipline and superior arms made them more than a match for their uncivilized adversaries.

Closing up around the falconet, which was being reloaded, the short, strong swords, wielded by hands accustomed to their use, laid low all who came within their reach, while the stone tomahawks, thrown by the Indians, who could not get near enough to use them otherwise, struck showers of sparks from the steel cuirasses

and casques, but did little actual harm. Like harvesters of death the Spaniards stood shoulder to shoulder, cutting down the dark harvest as it surged up to them, until their swords and arms were soaked in blood, and the ground was encumbered with dead and dying men. Then the little rank opened, and the falconet completed the fearful work.

The few Indians who survived this terrible slaughter, disheartened, and, in many cases, disabled, reluctantly turned their backs to their foes and followed in the footsteps of those who had fled at the beginning of the action.

Only one of the Spaniards had been killed—a tomahawk having cleft his chin and buried itself in his throat—but several were more or less injured; two so severely as to unfit them for further duty. Sending these two wounded men to their quarters, Gonzales marched the remainder of his little force, with the falconet in their midst, to the support of their comrades in the front, where the battle was still raging with great fury.

The savages, after their first repulse, had returned to the attack with more determination than they had yet shown. Hearing the sounds of a conflict within the camp and believing their flanking party had succeeded in making an entrance, they had pressed forward to the base of the works with brave persistency, notwithstanding the havoc made among them by the incessant

storm of bullets, and had well-nigh carried them by assault.

But the Spaniards, rallying in force on the most threatened points, leaving some men to keep up the fusillade along the line, had, by a vigorous use of their swords, driven them back. At last, finding they could make no impression on their formidable adversaries by a general attack, the Indians had formed themselves into two great storming parties, which, under the leadership of their most renowned warriors, moved silently and resolutely forward for a final struggle.

One of these parties, being infiladed by the falconet, had, after a few rounds from it and the arquebuses, retreated in confusion, but the other, out of reach of the cannon, had pushed on with dogged resolution until the foremost files had actually succeeded in gaining a foothold on the works.

It was just at this juncture that Gonzales came up with his reinforcements. By the dim light of the dawn, which had just broken, he could indistinctly see what was going on, and the field immediately in front of the spot where he stood appearing to be entirely deserted by the enemy, he took hold of the little cannon he had in charge and with the aid of several of his men hoisted it over the breastworks, planting it so that he could bring it to bear on the mass of struggling savages.

Two or three discharges from the gun, which was loaded each time with a handful of iron bullets, divided the dark mass of human beings into two distinct companies, one still advancing, the other retreating, and as soon as Gonzales saw this he threw down the lintstock that he had in his hand and drew his sword.

"To the rescue, comrades!" he shouted, "to the rescue!"

The charge of these men—only eighteen in number, but eighteen of the best soldiers in the troop—turned the tide of battle in favor of the Spaniards.

Rossi had up to this time maintained his ground manfully. He and his little force had strewn the ground about them with dead and dying men, but the multitude seemed undiminished. Those in the advance knew not that those behind had fled the field, but with yells and shrieks, fierce cries of wrath and exultation, regardless of death, they still pressed on, and never faltered until Gonzales and his men, striking them in the rear, cut their way through to the very front; and even then some refused to turn, but were cut down from behind while striking at the foe before them.

When the sun rose not an Indian, save the dead, was to be seen, and not all of the slain were there, the living having carried off many in their retreat.

Rossi paced to and fro on the low parapet looking over the field of battle, and his heart beat high with exultation. There were many dead men lying within a stone's throw of him—lying singly and in groups—and it was a mournful spectacle to awaken such a feeling; but he exulted—his soul within him was glad. He had achieved a wonderful success. Of that genius or talent—which is necessary for the conducting to successful issue battles and campaigns, he certainly had displayed a fair share, and if there be anything to rejoice the heart of man in being the chief actor in the bloody drama of war, then surely he had a right to exult and be glad. What though he had been the aggressor? What though he and his comrades, thrown by accident upon these shores, had been hospitably entertained and treated as friends by the simple and wondering inhabitants? Was he any the less a hero? He who had broken faith with a confiding people and slaughtered them without mercy!

He had taken off his casque to permit the cool morning breeze to fan his hot brow, and as he stood dreaming of the future, in whose shadowy depths he seemed to see an aureole of glory held over his head by princely hands—whizz!—something flashed so close that it grazed his cheek. Hastily putting on his casque he turned to see whence the missile had come, when another struck him fair in the forehead and fell to the ground at his feet. It was an arrow, and had it

not been for the steel headpiece he had donned so quickly his dream of glory had been but short indeed.

The blow stunned him, but he recovered in time to see a flying form drop behind a log over which a dead Indian was lying.

Stepping down within the parapet, but keeping his attention fixed on the spot where the figure had disappeared, he called two soldiers to him, and telling them what had happened directed them to take their arquebuses, go outside the fortification and, as if searching for something on the field of battle, gradually approach the log behind which the fugitive was hiding from opposite sides. Should he attempt to escape they were instructed to shoot him, but to endeavor to take him alive.

The men, though physically weary with slaying, and about to seek needed rest in their quarters, nevertheless started off with alacrity to obey these orders. It was sport to them to hunt one more wretched savage to the death, though it would seem that the evidence of the past few hours' bloody work lying there, still and ghastly in the morning light, should have been enough to glut the most sanguinary appetite.

When they were gone on their mission the *Commandante* called the sentinel who was pacing his beat a short distance off and told him to take his stand beside him.

"Dost thou see yonder log, Benito?" he asked, when the man had done as he was bade. He did not make any sign to indicate what log he meant, though there were a good many logs lying about in the open space between the entrenchments and the forest, and Benito, casting a glance over the field, looked mystified.

"What log doth your *señoria* refer to?" he asked; "I see many logs."

"Look thou well to the left," was the reply, "and thou wilt see a log across which a dead savage lieth with his head this way, the tuft of hair on the top of his head hanging down like the tail of some animal."

"Ah," said the soldier, "I know now which log you mean, *señor*. It drew my attention before the sun rose owing to that same savage lying there. As you say, the tuft of hair looketh like the tail of a four-footed creature, and methought at first 'twas some beast of prey that had come to breakfast on the dead."

"'Tis well," responded Rossi. "Now, what I have to tell thee is this: Behind that log on which there is a dead man lying there is a living man hiding."

"And wherefore doth he hide there, *señor*?"

"For no good, that I can tell thee. When the feast is o'er and the revelers departed, he that lingereth behind hath some evil design."

"I doubt it not, *señor*; but what design hath this knave savage, think you?"

"Look thou," said Rossi, picking up the arrow that lay at his feet; "had this accursed little thing done the work it was sent to do I were a dead man now."

"*Caramba!*" exclaimed the man.

"Ay," continued the officer, lifting the visor of his steel cap and showing the place on his forehead where it had struck, red and swollen, "the savage aimed well, but the casque was made of true metal—may the saints be good to the armorer who forged it!—and he failed in his purpose. He is now lying behind yonder log, and Rafael and Lorenzo have gone to make captive of him, an' it be possible. But these people are cunning and fleet of foot. Ere they can come near him he may escape to the forest. Now, that which I would have thee do is, in case he leaves his lair to shoot him, an' thou hast skill eno' to do it."

"I am not lacking in skill in the use of my weapon, *señor*, as any of my comrades can tell you," replied the soldier; "at long distance or short distance, at a stationary mark, I can shoot with the best of them, but a flying mark is always difficult to hit."

"Thou canst do thy best," said Rossi; "'tis all I require of thee."

In the meantime Rafael and Lorenzo, with their heads bent and walking slowly, stopping now and then to pick up an arrow or a tomahawk, approached the spot on which the eyes of Rossi

and Benito were fixed. But the savage must have been watching them, and probably suspected a trap, for he suddenly jumped up and ran toward the forest before they had half accomplished their purpose; and the two were so earnest in pretending to be only bent on a quest for battle-field relics that they actually did not know what had happened until they heard the report of Benito's gun, when looking up they saw the fugitive drop after limping along a little further.

"A most excellent shot," said Rossi. "Thou didst not boast of thy skill without reason, my good Benito, and hadst thou not been so quick and true of eye yon savage would have escaped."

But the soldier did not appear to take much pride in what he had done; the expression of his face had suddenly become serious.

"What aileth thee, man?" asked Rossi. "Art not content with thy marksmanship?"

"Nay, sooth," replied the man, "I am not content."

"And wherefore, prithee?"

"I fired too quickly."

"Fired too quickly?" repeated Rossi.

"Ay, *señor*; for methinks the quarry is a woman. But it was too late when I perceived this—it came like a flash—fuse was already to powder, and the ball sped on its errand."

"Didst thou never in all thy wars kill a woman?"

"It may well be, *señor*, that I have done so in the taking of a town, on which occasions there be ever some women will thrust themselves to the front in the *melee*, but I have ne'er slain one of them in cold blood, to that I can take mine oath, unless I have had the mischance to slay one now."

"Tush!" ejaculated Rossi; "suppose it to be a woman—what then? 'Tis one savage the less."

"I know there be some, *señor*, who would look upon the slaying of this wild woman in the same light as the slaying of a wild cat," replied Benito, "but for me, I am not of that mind; albeit a heathen, she is nath'less a woman. The old mother in Spain, who cared for me when I could not care for myself is a woman, and to her I gave a pledge, when I left her to seek my fortune in the world, that I would ne'er harm one who might be a mother. 'For,' said she, 'tis ill slaying the dam of the suckling kid.' "

So saying the soldier returned to his post, and a few minutes later Rafael and Lorenzo brought in the wounded Indian and laid her bleeding and gasping at Rossi's feet; for a woman it proved to be—Nanatonah.

CHAPTER XX.

THE OLD WORLD.

“I crave your *señoria’s* pardon.”

Antonia looked up. A woman she had never seen before stood in front of her. The intruder was dressed in the habit usually worn at that time by tire-women of ladies of rank. “I crave your *señoria’s* pardon,” she repeated.

“How camest thou hither?” asked the maiden.

“Your *señoria*, I was told, hath no one competent to assist in the duties of the toilet, and——”

“But thou hast not made answer to my question,” interrupted Antonia. “How camest thou hither?”

“Surely your *señoria* must know that I would not have come unless properly introduced by one of the household.”

“And, prithee, tell me who hath been so bold as to introduce thee into this apartment without license of its mistress.”

“A young man whom I met in the vestibule told me where I would find the *señora doña*, and, coming on an honest errand, I thought it no

harm to follow his direction and seek you here."

"Ah. And now tell me what this honest errand may be—if it concerneth me."

"I was about to do so when your *señoria* interrupted me."

"Yes. I have a fancy—a whim, perchance some would call it—to take everything in its due course, and I had asked thee a question which required an answer before anything else might be considered. But now thou hast answered my question, so thou mayst expound thy reason for being here."

"As I have already said, *señorita*, I was told you had no maid."

"Thou wert then mistold; for I have a maid—one that is all sufficient to my needs."

"Ah, yes, the little black girl who waiteth on your *señoria*. But surely she hath not the art to adorn *la señorita*'s person as it should be adorned; she cannot dress her magnificent hair, nor arrange the mantilla so as to make her beauty most effective."

"I am content to make mine own toilet, and my little black girl as thou art pleased to call her, though she is scarce a shade blacker than thyself, hath taste eno' to give an opinion worth the having."

"But I, *señorita*, have served as tire-woman to ladies of high degree, and there is not one who hath e'er found fault with me."

"Thou dost speak as thou hadst served many. How doth it chance, an' thou didst please them all, as thou sayst, that thou wert not sufficiently content to stay with one?"

"There be many reasons, *señorita*, that may compel a servant to quit the service of a mistress who hath every amiable quality, and with whom she would gladly remain. Some times 'tis the master of the house; he may not be agreeable—or," with a simper, "he may be too agreeable. Then again, 'tis the location; it may be in the country, where 'tis dull, or in a noisy part of the city, which is as bad to one who loveth quiet without dullness, and life without clamor."

"Twould seem then, from thine own avowing, that thou art hard to please, and e'en had I need of thy services thou wouldest scarce serve me long; for to one like thee life in this house would prove dull without measure."

"Permit me to differ with you, *señorita*. 'Twas the quiet of this place, which hath not the dullness of the country that first attracted me, and methinks I should be well content to stay here always."

"Ah, well," said Antonia, who was getting weary of the interview, "there is no question as to whether thou wouldest be content or no; for, as I have already told thee, I have no need of thy services."

"The lady whom I served last told me the same thing, *señorita*," said the woman, making

a respectful courtesy and moving towards the door, "and yet within a month she sent for me, and," stopping in the doorway, "I only left her because she was about to retire to a convent."

"To retire to a convent?" repeated Antonia.

"Yes, *señorita*," replied the woman, coming a few steps back into the room. "You see she hath a lover who sailed to the Indies a short while agone, and when he went away she betook her to the convent, where she will await his return, when they will be wed, she and the *señor Hernandez*."

"Hernandez!" repeated Antonia with a little gasp, "didst thou say the *señor Hernandez*?"

"Yes, your *señoria*, the *señor* Julio Hernandez. He is a handsome cavalier as e'er was beholden by the eyes of wife or maid, but he is poor, and the *señorita* having naught save in expectation, he was obligated to seek his fortune in those wild countries that they say are on the other side of the great sea."

Before her visitor had finished speaking Antonia had regained her composure, and her mind naturally acute—a quality it owed to the Jewish strain in her blood—discerned something suspicious in this plausible tale. She remembered that the young clerk of her grandfather had told her Don Julio Hernandez was betrothed to a lady in Seville; and then it occurred to her that he it was who had sent the woman to her. Ah! here was a conspiracy. The woman did not

understand the sudden flashing of the splendid eyes; she imputed it to jealous ire, and was entirely unprepared for the storm that burst over her; for when Antonia arose to her feet she seemed to tower above her, so high did she lift her magnificent head.

“God’s mercy, woman!” she said, “art not afeared thou’lt drop dead where thou standst, like the two liars the good priests tell of? And there be two of you likewise. O, thou wretched tool of a despicable knave! How darest thou come to me, a woman like thyself, to try to make me miserable? To kill me? Aye! To kill me! For what could I do but die, an’ that which thou hast told were true? But ’tis a lie, as thou well knowest, a horrible lie, meant to poison my very soul. Ah, *Santa Maria mia!* hast thou no shame—no pity?”

“But—but, *señorita*, how was I to know that the *señor* Hernandez was aught to you? And your *señoria* may put what I have said to the proof, an’ you will.”

“Proof!” cried the maiden with infinite scorn. “Thinkst thou I would degrade Don Julio Hernandez by bandying his name about in such a quest? Nay, I’m not the poor, weak fool that thou and thy employer think me. Hast thou no fear of hell, woman? Hast thou no fear of God? He, who implanted in our hearts, to be our chiefest blessing, that love which thou wouldst turn into a curse, with thy vile, slanderous tongue.

Out of my sight! Away with thee! ere I be tempted to demean myself and avenge on thy person the insult offered to a most noble cavalier and to me."

She stood near a little table, on which her hand rested, and by the merest accident her fingers came in contact with a long-bladed, curious-looking knife that lay upon it—it was an antique Moorish weapon, kept simply as a curiosity.

Involuntarily she clutched it, as she might have clutched anything else that she chanced to touch, and the woman, perceiving the action, uttered a little shriek and fled from the room.

Antonia looked down at the implement she held in her hand, and with a laugh that was a strange anti-climax to her outburst of passion, let it drop on the table. She then hastened after her unwelcome visitor, to see that she left the house.

As she drew near the vestibule she heard the voice of Joses, her grandfather's clerk. He was speaking in a low tone of smothered anger, but sufficiently loud for her to hear what he said, though disdaining to stop and listen, she only heard a few words.

"Fool!" he said, "to be affrighted of a girl, who, though she looketh like a young lioness when she is angered, would scarce hurt a kitten."

"A lioness, truly," replied the woman whose departure she had come to hasten, "and one—"

she did not finish her sentence, for just then the lioness came upon them, her eyes still flashing; but now they were turned upon the clerk.

"How darest thou stop this woman whom I have just dismissed from my presence?" she asked.

"Craving your pardon, *señorita*," replied the young man, "may not one be civil to a woman—even a poor serving woman—without offence?"

"Dost go out of thy way to be civil to poor serving women?" a tone of sarcasm in the speaker's voice. "Thy duties lie in the office of my grandfather, and yet thou art here when this one is about to depart, as thou wert when she came hither; for she told me thou didst send her to my private apartment."

The man cast a furious glance at the tire-woman, and replied, "Though my duties lie in the *señor* Murillo's office of business, the vestibule is common to all the household, and, of a surety, you will not impute it as a fault that I chance in coming and going to meet a woman who came here enquiring for your *señoria*, nor that I gave her the advice she sought."

Antonia turned from him and addressed herself to the woman, who had stood silently regarding the young man with a frown on her brow. "Speak," she said, "an' thou speak'st the truth I will pardon thee for the part thou hast played in this plot to destroy my happiness. Was't at the instigation of this man thou cam'st to me with the lying tale thou didst tell?"

The woman thrust her hand in her bosom, and withdrawing it immediately, threw a purse, in which there were several pieces of money, at the feet of the man.

"There!" she said, "take thy gold; I'll none of it, though I earned it fairly." Then, to Antonia, "I deserve not your *señoria's* pardon; for had this man permitted me to depart in peace, I had not betrayed his confidence; but he stopped me here to revile me because that you did not believe the tale he himself had concocted; therefore, I hold myself no longer bound to him."

Antonia looked at her in silence a moment, then she asked, "Art thou one of the race of Israel?"

"The saints forbid!" was the quick response.

"And yet thou hast engaged in a base conspiracy with one of that race."

"He paid well for the service, and I am poor," casting a wistful glance at the purse, that still lay at the feet of Joses; "and, when all's said, 'twas but a simple thing."

"Callst thou that a simple thing which might send thy soul to perdition? Had I been the poor, weak fool thou didst take me for, thou mightst have compassed my death, and 'tis as sinful to kill with a lie as with the dudgeon—perchance more so. But, go now and thank the blessed Lord and His saints that thou hast failed."

The woman, glad to escape so easily, went forth into the street, and Antonia quitted the vestibule to return to her chamber, without deigning a glance at Joses, who stood still a moment looking down at the purse, which he picked up and hid somewhere in the folds of his gabardine.

A few days after this occurrence Judit, Antonia's little maid, was standing in the main portal of the house looking out into the street, when she was accosted by Rodrigo.

"Good Morrow, my little Morisca," said he.

"Good Morrow, *soldado mio*," she replied.

"And how fareth her *señoria* prithee?"

"Passing well, save that she pineth over much for a certain cavalier who hath cruelly deserted her."

"He hath not deserted her, saucy wench, as thou knowest; but a poor soldier of fortune may not dally at my lady's feet, like your rich *señor*; he hath his way to win. But come, where is thy mistress?"

"Had I a lover who left me to go to t'other end o' the world," said the girl, without heeding his question, "I'd find me another as good, and when he came back he might e'en woo some other maid."

"And dost give such counsel to the *señorita* Antonia?"

"Nay, not I, an' I did mine ears would ring a full hour after, I trow."

"Aha! The *señora dona* can use that pretty hand of hers to good purpose then."

"Ay, that can she. But tell me, *soldado mio*, what hath brought thee here so soon again—'tis scarce a sennight since thou wert here before. Hast had news of the *señor Hernandez*?"

"Hath not the *señorita* had news of him?" asked the soldier, with a look of surprise.

"Nay, not so much as a word."

"Then shall she have, and that right soon, I promise thee. Now run away, there's a good wench, and tell her I am here."

"But why wilt thou not come to her?"

"'Tis not fitting that one like me should seek fine ladies i' their chambers. Doth that suffice thee?"

"Nay, but thou mightst come into the vestibule or the patio, and my lady could see thee there," persisted the girl.

"*Sapristi!*" said the soldier, "thou seemst resolved to make me feel above myself; but I tell thee, *doncella*, I am unaccustomed to fine society and should feel but awkward in a great house like this one, so let me have mine own way, and do thou mine errand."

And all this was simply because Rodrigo's prejudices, which he had imbibed with his mother's milk, would not permit him to set foot across the threshold of a Jew.

In a few moments Antonia greeted him with a smile and a pleasant word.

"Ah, Rodrigo," she said, "it greatly contenteth me to see thee again, good friend. But thou didst tell me thou had'st occasion to be absent from Seville a short while. How is't thou art still here? Or hast thou already been away and returned?"

"I should have quitted your fine city this very day, *señorita*," replied Rodrigo, "had I not chanced to meet an old comrade of mine who hath just returned from the Indies and who bringeth news that it will rejoice your *señoria* to hear."

"News," repeated Antonia, with a catch in her breath as her heart gave a leap of joy, "news from the Indies, didst thou say?"

"Ay, *señorita*. This comrade of mine, you must know, hath but now returned from Hispaniola, and when I learned this I set me to questioning him. He saith *La Esperanza* touched at the port and remained there some days. She had had a prosperous voyage, and all aboard of her were well."

"Ah! And my lord, Don Julio?"

"Before leaving Hispaniola the *señor* Hernandez confided to the charge of the captain of the ship on which my comrade returned to Spain a letter, which was doubtless for your *señoria*."

"And this captain," said Antonia, anxiously, and a little impatiently, "where is he? Why hath he not delivered me this letter? O, my precious

letter! When will I get it, Rodrigo? Couldst thou not find this captain, and—”

“But stay, *señorita*,” interrupted the soldier; “I have been a great fool not to have told you before everything else, that the ship which brought this letter belongeth to Cadiz, and the captain, 'tis like, hath not yet found a safe hand to entrust it to.”

“Why could he not have sent it by thy comrade?”

“No man knoweth better than myself, that one like my comrade is scarce to be trusted with matters of import, be they letters or what not; for I shame to say it, your *señoria*, when there is no war afoot the wine shop is our usual haunt, and there is not one in a score of us who would trouble himself about so seeming small a matter as a letter, unless his pouch chanced to be empty and he hoped to replenish it by the delivery.”

“But if thy comrade had brought me my letter I would have rewarded him—ay with double measure, Rodrigo.”

“I doubt it not,” replied Rodrigo; “but I'll warrant you, the captain of this ship knew right well what he was doing, for my comrade hath more wind than wisdom, as he must have known.”

“Ah, me,” heaving a great sigh, “how long will it be ere I get my letter, thinkest thou?”

"Not long—that I will avouch," replied Rodrigo, who now wished he had not said a word about the letter; "two days, three days, perchance—not more."

"Then must I have patience. Alas! 'tis easier said than done, for patience abideth not with us when most 'tis needed."

"Now do I reproach me for telling your *señoria* about this same letter," said the soldier.

"Nay, my good friend, reproach not thyself," said Antonia; "'tis a joy to me to know that there is a letter coming e'en though the arrival be delayed."

"Good, *señorita*, that's the way to take it; and now you give me heart to go this journey which I am obligated to take."

"How long wilt thou be gone, Rodrigo?"

"A fortnight perchance, no longer. I go toward Cadiz, and should I chance to meet any travellers coming this way I'll make bold to question them, and should one of them have this same precious letter in charge, I will bid him hasten."

"Ay," said Antonia, her eyes brightening and her voice ringing sweetly in anticipation of the joy to come, "and tell him I will reward him well as soon as the letter is placed in my hands."

"But," continued the soldier, "should I not be so fortunate as to meet the bearer of the letter, then will I seek the captain of the ship and get it from him and e'en fetch it myself."

"Do, good Rodrigo," the joy note already gone out of the voice at the suggestion of possible delay, "and the reward shall be thine."

"I desire no other reward than a word of approval from you, *señorita*."

"And that shalt thou have in advance."

"Then am I content. So now, *adios*."

"*Adios*, and a prosperous journey to thee."

CHAPTER XXI.

There was a chamber in Beneberak's house that was seldom entered by any one of the household save Antonia. It was the chamber in which her parents had died, and here had been arranged an oratory where she was wont to offer up her daily prayers; for there was not a more devout Christian in Seville than she. There was a little altar, covered with a piece of costly silk embroidered in gold thread, over which was a crucifix in ivory, done by the cunning hand of Benvenuto Cellini, and over that a picture of the Madonna and the child-Christ, painted by Corregio. Beneberak would not have permitted anything that was not a masterpiece in its way to hold a place in his house, for though he believed not in the divinity of the subjects portrayed, and deemed the uses to which they were to be put a mockery, he believed in the divinity of the art that portrayed them. He and his granddaughter looked at these things from different points of view. To him they were simply evidences of man's genius; to her, the beautiful symbols of a great truth.

This chamber was hung with tapestry that fell loosely to the floor, and stirred with the breeze

that entered at the open window. The wall was double on one side and behind the tapestry was a little door communicating by a flight of narrow stairs between the two walls with an underground chamber, quadrangular in shape, about twenty by thirty feet in size. This was also a sanctuary. It was a secret place of worship, where a few Jews—for the most part old men and women—who clung to the faith of their fathers, met on special occasions to practice the rites of their religion as ordained by the Mosaic law. At one end of the quadrangle stood an altar, the altar of incense, and behind that was a chest made of precious wood in which was kept the Book of the Law.

For ventilation, narrow openings had been left in the masonry on a level with the pavement of the patio, where a thick growth of dwarf shrubs served to conceal them, and light was supplied by a dozen or more wax tapers held in golden pomegranates affixed to the walls. The light from these tapers fell on a group of persons gathered about a brazen lectern, upon which the scroll lay open, and Beneberak stood there reading in a low, but distinct voice.

It was the 14th day of the first month of the Hebrew Sacred year—the month Nisan (March)—and this little congregation, composed entirely of aged men and women, had come together to keep the feast of the Passover, though they knew they did so at the risk of their lives. Clothed in

dark robes, girded at the loins, each holding a staff in the right hand, or leaning on it with both hands for support, with their strongly marked and sorrowful faces, they presented, under the flickering light of the tapers, a weird and striking picture.

Having read from the Book of the Law, Beneberak lifted his eyes from the page and looked around upon the withered faces before him, in some of which was an expression of apprehension—almost of terror.

“Brethren,” he said, “brethren in love, in persecution, in affliction, we have met here in secret to commemorate an event that for ages hath been commemorated by the children of Israel. Scattered over the face of the earth, reviled, hunted to the death, like the wild beast of the wilderness, thousands of our race, despite the rack and the stake, dare, like us, to celebrate the sacred feast. In the land of the stranger, with his heel upon their necks and his knife at their throats, the seed of Abram first tasted of the lamb that was slaughtered for their salvation; in the land of the stranger, with his heel upon our necks and his knife at our throats, in the name of the Most High, the Great Jah, whom our fathers knew, who led them out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, do we, likewise, eat of the slaughtered lamb.”

Then the speaker took from a table that stood near a silver ewer, in which was the flesh of the

slaughtered lamb, broken into bits and mingled with bitter herbs, and having tasted of the meat and the herbs himself, handed it to an elder, when it was passed from one to another, each taking a portion and eating, some with stern composure, others in fear and trembling, with furtive looks and keenly listening ears.

The Church of Spain was a terrible power in those days, pursuing with remorseless zeal all whom it termed heretics or infidels, condemning them to torture and the stake; and the hapless Jew was the special object of its vengeance. The marvel is, with all that that wonderful race has suffered at the hands of all other creeds, that there is one now left on the face of the earth. Europe—Christian Europe, at that time was a mere slaughter pen—a very hell, in the lowest depths of which the children of Israel crouched and cringed. And should a congregation such as that now met in Beneberak's house be surprised in their act of devotion, which was not only contrary to the mandates of the Church, but to the laws of the State, and which became so much the more heinous in that they had every one professed Christianity and been baptized—their lives would surely pay the forfeit.

Having replaced the ewer on the table, Rabbi Beneberak resumed his discourse.

“They would have us forsake the faith of our fathers,” he said, “to worship their images of stone and wood—their painted pictures of

women. Shall we do this thing? Nay. The Lord our God hath said, 'Thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them,' and we will keep the law though death be the penalty. What fear ye? Is it death? Death is better than life. Fear naught, my brethren, save God alone, and thank Him that He hath given us death, a sure refuge from sorrow and suffering, from the snares of the wicked and the blows of the cruel."

Then turning his face to the east, toward the City of God, where the great temple built by Solomon once stood, he prayed "Oh, Jehovah! Almighty Father! Who didst lead Thy people out of the bondage of Egypt, through the Red Sea and the Wilderness, to the further shores of Jordan—Thou didst promise our father, Abram, and again our father Jacob, and yet again Thy servant, Moses, that we, Thy people, should be Thy peculiar people—Thine especial charge, whom Thou wouldest bless and multiply on the face of the earth, and make rich and prosperous above all other peoples. Behold us now, O Lord God of our fathers! fugitives, hiding from the sight of them that covet our wealth and thirst for our blood, and seeking Thee in secret places, where the eye of man seeth not. How long, how long, Lord, must Thy people suffer? Restore now Thy city, Jerusalem, and Thy Holy Temple. The wicked laugh at us and mock us, because, they say, we have no God. They remember not that Thou hast said, 'I, even I, will avenge my people.'

They trust in their armors of steel and their engines of war, which rend the air with a noise like thunder; they shout in their wrath and spare not, neither the old man nor the young child. Have mercy upon us, O Lord God of Israel! Remember not our iniquities, though they be many and grievous, but remember Thy servant, Shemaiah, and Thy beloved David, and have mercy upon us. Avenge us on them that hate us! Let not the sharp swords of our enemies smite us! but let the proud man be cast down in the dust, and let the cruel man perish in his wickedness! Amen!"

"Amen!" responded the little congregation, in a low, deep murmur, and then for a time all was still.

In the chamber above this secret tabernacle sat Antonia reading her letter, which had been delivered to her by a sailor that very day—three days after the departure of Rodrigo. Thus it ran:

"These, with greeting, dearly Beloved.

"Know that when we floated out of the Guadalquivir a gentle wind wafted us out of sight of the hills of Andalusia, and not till then did I cease to look backward to that dear land where I had left, with what grief I may not tell thee, a loving heart that I knew would pine till my return.

"Why, then, thou wilt ask, did I leave thee? Know, love, that no true knight may sit down at his lady's feet until he hath won fame and for-

- tune; therefore, have patience. I will not tarry from thee longer than I may be obligated by circumstances.
- “When we had lost sight of Spain, I turned with a heavy heart—ay, I will confess that mine own heart was heavy, love—and faced the future that lay before me.
- “The gentle wind we had brought with us from Andalusia died away, or returned whence it came, and was succeeded by baffling, boisterous gales, that tossed us about in much discomfort and some peril many days; but at last, with no loss of life, and little damage to our brave ship we arrived at this place, Hispaniola, a beautiful and exceedingly fertile island, abounding in delicious fruits, which, I warrant thee, we were rejoiced to get after our long penance on coarse sea fare. Here shall we remain some short while when we shall sail yet further westward. The most excellent, the Captain Mendez, who is here refitting his ship to return to Spain, and who shall convey this letter to thee by a safe hand when he arriveth in the port of Cadiz, hath told me of lands as yet little known, where he thinketh advantage may be had, not only in new discoveries, but in barter with the natives, and thither—”
- When she had read thus far Antonia’s attention was distracted from her letter by a low growl from Carlos, who was lying at her feet, and, looking up, she saw a tall, dark man, dressed in

priestly robes, standing silently surveying the walls of the apartment. She turned deathly pale, and sat, like one spellbound, gazing at the intruder. The dog, after its first manifestation of anger, seemed to be likewise affected and lay perfectly still, also, with eyes fixed on the man, who, turning to the door through which he had entered, beckoned to some one without, when immediately six other men, armed with swords, came into the room.

“There,” he said, pointing to the tapestry that covered the double wall; “tear it down.”

The men moved to obey and Antonia, rising, started forward.

“Nay, nay, holy father,” she cried, “destroy not my beautiful hangings. See! this is my oratory,” pointing to the altar, “and why will you desecrate it?”

“Thine oratory, ay,” replied the priest, bending a stern look on her. “Go pray, woman! There be them in this house who will stand in need of thy prayers—go pray and meddle not with the servants of the holy office.”

The men ripped up the tapestry with their swords and began to tear it down, when Carlos, who had been watching them with an angry eye and bristling hair, flew at them, barking furiously. As their legs were protected by the heavy serge gowns they wore and he did not attempt to bite, they heeded him not but continued their work and soon found the secret door in the wall,

which they forced open, disappearing, one after another down the narrow staircase leading to the chamber below.

The priest was about to follow when Antonia threw herself in the way.

"Stay, father!" she cried, falling on her knees, and clutching his robe; "Go not before you have heard me. I am a faithful daughter of Holy Church and I will speak the truth."

He tried to shake her off, but not roughly; he treated her with a gentleness that appeared foreign to the nature of one with a countenance so stern as his.

"Listen to me," she insisted, clinging to him. "My grandfather, Basilio Murillo, you know, father, is a good old man—all know that. He is charitable—he giveth to the poor much of his substance. Yes, father. Ask the poor of Seville. They will tell you he denieth them not when they come to him in their distress."

"Tis well for him," said the priest, "if he be what thou sayest he is. "Charity covereth a multitude of sins; yet must we suffer for our sins, and Basilio Murillo breaketh the law, and maketh a mock of the Holy Sacrament of baptism, which he hath received. Even now doth he these things."

"Oh, father," she replied, the tears that had been brimming in her eyes breaking bounds and trickling down her pale cheeks, "he but keepeth the festival of the paschal lamb. Our dear Lord

and His holy apostles did that, and surely 'tis no sin—what they did. He hath all reverence for Holy Church. And consider father, he is old: he hath but a few more years to live in the natural course, and why should those few years be cut short for so slight a thing? For I know when you take him hence these eyes that love the sight of him will see him no more. Alas! my father, when I lose him I lose all I have; I will be alone. Ah! think of it, father! a poor maiden like me without a friend in all this cruel world!"

Her voice was full of saddest pathos, but the man, who had thus far hearkened to her with a strange exhibition of patience, still preserved in his countenance the stern, uncompromising expression habitual to it; if his heart was touched he never showed it by a wavering look.

"The church," said he, "hath wisely provided a safe refuge for all who may have the misfortune to be in such straits. Now, go pray; duty hath its claims as well as mercy."

With the exercise of a little force, he wrenched himself free of her grasp, and pointing to the crucifix over the altar, descended to the chamber below.

But she, instead of turning to the altar, with a moan of anguish, fell prone on the floor, where she lay perfectly still, like one dead, Carlos, who had become quiet after his first outbreak of furious anger, lying down beside her whining.

The men who first entered the Tabernacle

found Beneberak alone. He was standing by the table on which was the ewer containing the meat.

"Where are thy companions?" asked the leader.

"Thou seest I am alone," was the reply.

"Ay, alone now; but where are they who joined thee in thy iniquity even now?"

There was no answer.

"Speak!" said the man, drawing his sword, "speak! ere I strike thee dead!"

"The dead whom thou makest will speak forever," replied the old man calmly.

The sword was returned to its scabbard, and the man, who had no authority to use violence, save in case of resistance, directed those under him to search for the way by which Beneberak's companions had escaped.

While they were thus engaged the priest came on the scene.

"Basilio Murillo," he said, "what doest thou here?"

"Thou seest," replied Beneberak, dipping his hand into the ewer and carrying a bit of the lamb's flesh to his mouth. "But call me not Basilio Murillo; my name is Beneberak, as thou well knowest, and that thou hast chosen to bestow upon me is but a foolish mockery."

There was something sublime in the defiance conveyed by this simple act and the words accompanying it. It was the man's soul that spoke. His body, he knew, no longer belonged to him;

it belonged to the authorities of church and state —to do with as they would; but his soul belonged to its Creator, and no man had authority over it. What mattered it though his body were destroyed. The destruction of the body would be but the freeing of the spirit—sending it beyond and above the destroyers and their narrow sphere. For that part of man which is all of him worth preserving—his essence—is as far beyond the reach of the powers of this earth as the remotest star that gleams in the universe of his God. The dauntless soul knows this, and defies them to do their worst. Ah! wisely hath the Power Supreme limited the span of each little life on this earth to a few years!

No more words were wasted on the obstinate old Hebrew, and an underground passage leading out of the tabernacle having been found, Beneberak, with his arms securely bound, was ordered to lead the way, which he did without protest, muttering a few Hebrew words as he entered the dark passage, followed by his captors.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE NEW WORLD.

The Indian woman was wounded in the thigh, and Rossi ordered her to be carried to one of the huts, where she was turned over to the care of the other women, he retiring to his own quarters to seek much needed repose.

The soldier who had fired the shot looked after him as he walked away, and muttered to himself: "He's a good soldier, that I'll ne'er deny after seeing the brave fight he made yesternight, but it pleases me not to have been made a partner in such an affair as hath just befallen."

"At what art thou grumbling, *amigo?*" asked a voice behind him, and Benito turning about confronted one of his comrades, who, having heard the shot, had come to see what was going forward.

"Why, just this, José *mio*," he replied. "At the behest of *el señor* Rossi, I deliberately leveled mine arquebuse at a woman, and had the misfortune to hit the mark."

"And what of that?" asked José, laughing. "Art so tender hearted as to cry over a hurt

wench? Thou who hast been a soldier in the wars these ten years and more."

"I war against men, not women," said Benito. "Caramba! I'd liefer had the ball in mine own body than had a hand in putting it where it is. I know there be many would think lightly of this matter, as dost thou, perchance, José, but for me, I ne'er harmed wife, wench or widow until now, and I had not done that had not my fingers been quicker than mine eyes."

"And thou takest no credit to thyself for thy skill? Rafael told me 'twas a marvelous fine shot."

"Not a whit. I would my skill had been less ere it served me so ill a turn."

"Methinks thou hast somehow missed thy vocation, Benito," said José, as he walked away: "Thou shouldst have been the follower of some gentle craft—a weaver or a cordwainer—instead of a man-at-arms."

"Think as thou wilt," growled Benito, "but to my mind a man who hath some regard for the weakness of womankind may be as good a soldier as he who spareth neither age nor sex; and we should not now be cooped up here, keeping watch and ward, day and night, were there some others of my way of thinking."

But José heard not; he was out of earshot before Benito had well begun his protest, which would have been received with scoffs and jeers by a large majority of his comrades, had it been

uttered in their presence. Nevertheless, there were many who were of his opinion with regard to the cause of their then perilous position; for that it was perilous they began to perceive.

Twenty-five of the Spaniards had been wounded in the last battle with the savages—some of them seriously so—and several had been killed. A few more such victories would prove their destruction, and they began to consider the feasibility of marching along the coast to the eastward, in which direction was a Spanish settlement, but how far distant they knew not. What obstacles they might have to surmount before they could reach it they did not consider.

But, the question arose, what was to be done with the wounded. Some, who were only slightly hurt would, probably, in a few days, be in condition to undertake the journey, but those whose injuries were of a more serious nature would have to be transported in litters.

Nearly all the garrison were assembled not far from Rossi's headquarters in a sort of general council, when the man who was stationed on the lookout hastily descended from his perch and ran toward them.

"A ship! a ship!" he cried, almost breathless with excitement.

"Hey! what doth he say?" asked one of the comrade who stood nearest him, as if he doubted his own sense of hearing.

"A ship, he saith," replied the other, and the

man having come nearer, all eyes being fixed on him expectantly, cried out again, while he pointed seaward, "A ship! a ship!"

For a moment there was dead silence, every voice being hushed, and then there went up a great shout, and there was a tumultuous rush for the tree. Up, up, up they went, without regard to precedence of rank—he that was last being first in this instance—until the little platform in the tree was dangerously crowded, and the height of the tree itself might have been measured by the men clinging to its trunk.

"Canst tell what manner of ship it is, Sancho?" shouted Rossi, who had not succeeded in reaching the platform before it was too full of men to admit of another occupant.

"Ay, *señor*," cried the little sailor. "'Tis a Spanish caravel, an' I be not mistaken."

"And how layeth she her course?"

"To the westward, *señor*. She hath no press of canvas on her, and seemth to be drawing slowly along, searching, perchance, for an harbor, where she may find safe anchorage for the night."

"We must do what we may to attract her attention," said the *commandante*. "Go down!" he shouted to the men below him. "We will kindle fires," he said, when they had all descended, "and make a great smoke."

"And think you they will heed a smoke, *señor*?" asked Gonzales. "There is naught more common to be seen on these coasts."

"We will fire off the falconets," said Rossi, "and when 'tis night we'll set alight the fagots in the tree-top; it will go hard an' we draw not the attention of some on the ship."

"Fire and fagots!" said Gonzales, "'twill go hard truly, an' we draw not their attention, as you say, *señor commandante*; but perchance they will think the fire is kindled by savages who cook each other for supper, in which case 'tis like they'll steer clear of us. Nath'less, we can but do what we may; so come, comrades, let's to work and see if smoke and noise will compass our rescue."

So a great smoke was made and the falconets were discharged, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes in rapidly succeeding explosions.

The sun was setting when Sancho Pinto, who had been watching the movements of the caravel, came to report that she had entered the pass between the two islands, and lay to under the lee of the one furthest to the east, and the men, believing their signals had had the desired effect, were filled with joy. Nevertheless, Rossi, to make assurance doubly sure, directed the sailors to add yet more fuel to that already gathered in the tree, as he intended to kindle a fire that could not fail to attract attention.

And now, when all hearts were filled with gladness, a cruel thought entered his head, and he went in search of his lieutenant.

"Pablo," he said, "I have been considering what disposition to make of our captives."

"And to what conclusion hath your *señoria* arrived?" asked Gonzales.

"These savages both attempted to compass my death," said the Italian, "and for this they well deserve themselves to die, e'en had they not roused against us the enmity of the other savages."

"Even so. And what manner of death shall they die, señor?"

"Canst thou not guess?"

"There be many modes by which men—ay, and women, too—are sent post to the devil," said the Spaniard, with a sardonic smile. "Rebels and traitors are hung on gallows or broken on the wheel, and then drawn and quartered. Saints are sometimes stoned, sometimes broiled on a grid-iron, and heretics, witches and Jews are roasted. So it seemeth, there is little choice. Whether one be traitor, saint, heretic, witch or Jew, his goose is cooked for him, one way or another, and dressed with the same sauce, only under different names; it dependeth entirely upon who it is that catcheth him."

"These savages," said Rossi, who had listened with some impatience to this disquisition on the various modes of dealing with such as differed in opinion from them who chanced to be in power, "are both heretics."

"Not so, señor," interrupted the other. "The

priests say they are to be pitied, in that they have ne'er had pious teaching, and so they will not hear to their being served up hot, like your ordinary sinner, who hath forgotten or refuseth to receive mother church's dogmas when offered him."

"They are unbelievers," said Rossi, testily, "and the woman's a witch."

"True, and there being no priest to say us nay —thanks to the blessed sea, that swallowed, at one gulp, the only one we had on the ship, why not deal with them after the manner usual when the accused are heretics and witches, señor?"

"Certes, they merit no less," was the reply, "and methinks 'twould be well to make an example of them."

"'Tis well, señor, and fitteth to my humor," said the big brute, "and sith our purpose is to kindle a great fire in the top of yon tree, what could be more suitable than to set them in the midst of it, where they can grin at each other while they roast—the *auto da fè* is ever a cheering spectacle to Christian eyes, and a double *auto da fè* in mid air will be doubly so."

The Italian, who had not been educated in the refinement of cruelty, like the Spaniard, shuddered, but said nothing in deprecation of the inhuman act, and so it was settled.

The ligatures with which the Indian warrior was secured had prevented him from bleeding to death, and after many vain efforts to free him-

self from his bonds he had lain where Rossi and the soldier threw him without moving. Refusing all proffers of food, with a fierce glance of his dark eyes, he had turned his face away, and stoically awaited the hour of doom, which he knew could not be far distant. As for the manner in which he was to die—it concerned him not; but when half a dozen of his enemies came in the darkness of the night, with torches, and, bearing him forth, laid him at the base of the great pine, up into which men were hoisting billets of wood, he knew.

He had seen many warriors perish in like manner without making a sign that could betray to their enemies the agony they suffered, and he resolved that these, his enemies, should find in him one who could die as a brave man should. Therefore, when they laid him on the ground and stood a little way off watching him, they saw not the least sign of emotion in his stern, immobile countenance.

Presently there was a stir among the men standing around him, and then Nawatonah, borne on a rude litter, was brought within the circle. This was an unexpected meeting for both, and the heart of the warrior leaped within him, but there was no outward sign of feeling; and the girl, who had schooled herself into bearing the pain of her wound unflinchingly, showed scarcely less indifference, a sudden accession of ferocity

to the vengeful gleam of her feverish eyes being the only change noticeable in her face.

Now all was ready and the two Indians were about to be lashed to stakes, preparatory to hoisting them up into the tree, when Benito came forward and saluted Rossi.

“*Señor commandante*,” he said, “methinks ‘tis quite enough that this woman hath been shot, and is like to die of her wound, without adding so much to what she hath already suffered.”

Rossi looked at the man a moment as if he would strike him dead, and then remembering how slight was his hold on him and his comrades, hesitated before speaking—the words that were almost on his lips remaining unuttered.

“Thinkst thou so, *amigo*?” he said, in a conciliatory tone, one of those indefinable smiles that we often see on the faces of people when they smile unwillingly—through policy—playing curiously with the frown on his brow.

“Ay, señor,” was the reply, “and there be many others of my way of thinking.”

“But I”—began the Italian, when Gonzales touched him on the shoulder, and whispered something in his ear, whereupon he said, “Pablo doth suggest that the woman’s case be considered another time, and I will so far waive my claim to adjudge her for having attempted to murder me. Proceed with thy duty.” to the men who were engaged in binding Tishsico.

As Benito and several others lifted the litter to

carry Nawatonah back to her quarters, she cast one inquiring glance at her betrothed. Contempt curled his firm, set lips, but otherwise his air was one of stolid indifference, and a look of exultation came into the woman's eyes. He was worthy! Here again the soul of man—under other conditions of life—soared triumphant above the masters of his body.

The Indian was hoisted to the platform, and secured to a limb of the tree, the fagots were heaped around him and lighted, and then the man who performed this office hastened down to the ground, fearing to lose some part of the spectacle.

Slowly the fire crept at first, licking its hot tongues in and out of the interstices between the billets of wood, and then after having played with its victim thus for a little while, like a live, cruel thing, it leaped upward hissing and roaring, wrapping him in many torturing folds. Anon drawing away, as if to look in his face, with sudden swirl, it curled around him and the limb to which he was bound, soaring far above his head and setting alight the whole top of the tree, which blazed out like a great halo of glory around him for an instant, then died away, and was succeeded by myriads of sparks that ascended with a huge column of black smoke, and dispersed themselves in every direction. The cords which prevented his freedom of action were soon cut by the flames, and he could have cast

himself headlong to the earth, and thus ended the long agony of death, had he wished to do so; but he calmly laid his maimed arm on his breast—though it gave him excruciating pain to move it—folded the other over it, and looked down at his enemies, until overcome by the fierce, all-devouring element, he sunk, a charred and lifeless body, amid the glowing mass.

CHAPTER XXIII.

With the coming of dawn the garrison was astir, and the little sailor, Pinto, climbing up to the lookout, waited patiently for the light that should reveal to him whether the ship seen the day before were still where she lay at night-fall or gone as she had come.

The fire had denuded the tree of its crown of needle-like foliage, and destroyed the platform, but that mattered little to him, and settling himself among the charred and blackened limbs, he began to clear away the débris.

“Caramba!” he said, while engaged at this work, “it taketh a good hantel of wood to cook one savage. But this one, an’ this be a bit o’ him,” picking up a bone with some shreds of burnt flesh clinging to it, “is so much overdone that methinks his own kind—whom they say are man-eaters—would scarce find him palatable.”

Throwing this away and after it many fragments of charred wood, he suddenly stopped and carefully scrutinized something black that he held in his hand.

“This,” he said, “is his skull. Here were his eyes, and here his top-knot. Ha! *amigo*, an’ thy

warlock were thy passport to paradise, as 'tis said, thou art in bad case now, of a surety; for it hath been well singed—not a hair of it left. But thou wert a brave heathen, that I will say. I watched thee closely, and never once didst thou flinch. Thou didst look as thou wert going to be crowned rather than burned."

With this eulogium he tossed the skull away, and turned his eyes seaward.

"Ho! comrades!" he shouted to some men below, who were anxiously awaiting his report, "go tell the *señor commandante* she is still there, but hath not as yet hoisted sail. Good Morrow to you, friends," shaking his hand toward the distant ship, "a better acquaintance with you anon."

When the sun rose the ship was plainly to be seen from the shore. She had her sail set, and her course lay for the mainland, though not directly toward the point where the Spaniards were. But again the falconets roared to her, and soon an answering roar came over the water, and her course was changed. A new flag-staff was rigged—the old one having been burned—where once more the great standard floated conspicuously over the pine, and as the ship came to anchor opposite the encampment she fired the usual salute to the flag. As soon as the sails were furled a boat was lowered and manned, and a cavalier, evidently of superior rank, came down from the poop, and took his place in the stern-

sheets, when the oars, dipping with regular strokes, sent her rapidly through the water.

Rossi, accompanied by his lieutenant and several of the men went down to the water's edge to receive and welcome the stranger, who was a young man of commanding presence, differing from the most of Spaniards, in that his hair and beard were of a rich, auburn tint.

Don Julio Hernandez, whose opportune arrival had prevented his beleaguered countrymen from starting out on a desperate venture was fortunately well prepared to relieve their necessities; the caravel, after a voyage in the southern seas, having recently been refurnished at Villa Rica della Vera Cruz.

The men were anxious to get away from the place where they had undergone little else than hardships, but the Esperanza was too small a vessel to transport all of them, and Don Julio, who had accomplished little as yet, took it into his head that this would be a good place to found a colony, if he could re-establish friendly relations with the natives; for he had been informed of their hostility, and the battle recently fought with them, though he did not as yet understand why it was that such a state of affairs existed.

There was a chirurgeon, and also a priest, in his company, and under their care the wounded soldiers were soon doing well, with the exception of two or three whose hurts were of a very seri-

ous nature, and whose chances of recovery were small.

Though the *señor* Hernandez treated Rossi with punctilious courtesy and never questioned his authority, over his own men, he seemed to take command of the garrison by natural instinct of precedence, and this did not at all please the Italian, who soon found himself with only a few followers, Gonzales and some of his especial favorites, the other men being only too glad to have one of their own compatriots to whom they could look as their commander.

Nothing had been said about the wounded woman, who seemed to be improving under the treatment of the other women, and probably nothing would have been said had not Benito overheard Rossi and Gonzales conspiring to get rid of her. Neither of the men had any compunction as to the manner of dealing with her; it was how to carry out their purpose without danger of discovery that gave them pause for consideration.

“ ‘Twere an easy thing to strangle her and throw her in the river,” said Gonzales, “but it must be done when the full tide is running out; otherwise she may be cast up on the beach—as were some of the cadavers that were so disposed of after the fight—and that will set tongues a wagging, in which case ‘tis like she’d make as much trouble dead as she hath done living.”

“Ay,” replied Rossi, “trouble eno’ hath she

made—for very obstinacy, naught else—and I would not yon spriggald should know aught of the matter, not for the present, at any rate; for, I take it, from what he hath already said regarding these poor savages, as he calleth them— ascribing all their evil doings to ignorance instead of wickedness, that he is one of those callow youths who, not having been long weaned from their mothers' milk, affect a certain tender regard for all womankind, Christian or heathen, which is mere childish foolishness."

Gonzales laughed. "I have seen many such," he said. "They start out with the intent ne'er to lay hand on a woman save in the way of amorousness, but in time, after they have encountered some of them that bite and scratch like very hellcats, this punctiliousness assumeth the look of a vice in their eyes, and any wench who sayeth them nay may stand a chance of having her throat slit."

"It being but to strangle her and throw her in the river," said Rossi, recurring to the subject under discussion, "what were easier than to do it to-night? She lyeth alone in yonder hut, and the thing can be done when all is quiet in the camp, and who's to know aught of the matter?"

"But 'tis not so simple a thing as you seem to think, *señor*," said Gonzales. "It must be, as you know, when all is quiet in the camp, betwixt the midnight hour and dawn, as near midnight as may be, but the tide must be in our favor; and

time and tide conjoin not always to favor man's designs, be they good or otherwise, and at the present speaking they chance to be against us."

"And how long, thinkst thou, will it be ere they conjoin in our favor."

"Three days—not less. But there is another matter to be considered, and that is the watch."

"Art thou not captain of the watch, in turn with the others?"

"Ay, señor, I am."

"And canst thou not so arrange, by exchange with another, that thou shalt have the setting of the watch at such time as thou wilt, and then dispose of the men to suit our purpose—our own by the river—"

"Nay, nay! not even they must know aught of this," interrupted Gonzales. "I tell you, señor, him you deem your truest friend to-day may be your deadliest foe to-morrow."

Rossi looked at his companion suspiciously. "And thou, Pablo," he said, "wouldest thou desert me?"

"Ay, señor, an' 'twere to mine interest to do so," replied Pablo, frankly; "but here our interests tally, and cavaliers like to this *señor* Hernandez are not to my taste—they have not the true spirit of war in them."

"*Basta!* what dost thou propose?" asked the Italian, perfectly satisfied with the answer. He knew that nothing but self-interest governed his

own actions, though he would never have been so candid as to acknowledge it.

"This," said Gonzales; "I will see that Rafael is stationed at the last post on the river—that is a goodly distance, you perceive, from the lookout, which is a matter to be considered, and when the time hath arrived, and the thing is to be done, you have but to go to him and send him off on some errand—he'll go fast enough at your bidding—while you hold his place. The rest will I manage, and none will know other than that the girl hath gone to her own people."

Benito, who liked not to play the part of a spy and informer, did not tell Don Julio of the plot to murder Nawatonah, but he informed him of her presence in the camp, ascribing her wound to what he called a mischance.

"A mischance?" repeated Don Julio. "How came about such a mischance, prithee? And why is it I am only now apprised of this matter? My chirurgeon should have been attending the unfortunate had I known of her condition earlier. Thou takest a tardy interest in her it doth seem to me, *amigo*."

"The fact is, *señor*," said Benito, "the woman is doing very well, as concerneth her hurt, which she got through misapprehension, being mistaken for a man-savage when she was running away, after having shot an arrow at *el señor* Rossi, but the quarters to which she hath been assigned are none of the best, and I will willingly

give up mine own to her an' your *señoria* hath no objections."

This was an afterthought of the soldier, who was puzzled to account for what the *señor* Hernandez had called his tardy interest. And the thought was a very good one, for the woman would thus be brought into the midst of the camp, so that it would be difficult for Rossi and Gonzales to carry out their design, even should they wish to do so when they discovered that the girl's presence was no longer a secret.

"I will see the woman," said Don Julio, and guided by Benito, he went to a hut that stood somewhat apart from the others. It had been used as a sort of storeroom—where such of the accoutrements of the men as they did not care to be encumbered with, or had become useless, were deposited.

When the cavalier entered this place he found the Indian woman lying on a rude bedstead, constructed of pine poles and covered with moss. For this she was indebted to Benito, the soldier having done this much for her comfort as a salve to his conscience. She was asleep, and the visitor stood looking down upon her with eyes full of a great compassion; for she was very much emaciated, her cheeks were hollow, and the once round, graceful limbs were almost fleshless.

"Poor creature," he said, taking the thin hand in his. Just then she opened her dark, deep-sunken eyes, and looked up in his face. The

structure being low, he had doffed his head-piece on entering, and a broad ray of sunshine, breaking through a rent in the roof, threw a flood of light over him, making his closely curling hair to look like a mass of rings of gold, his burnished steel armor to glisten and glitter with a splendor that dazzled this simple child of nature. She was not afraid—not even startled.

To her he appeared a supernatural being that had come to visit her. Had she been a Christian maiden familiar with the traditions of the church, she would have thought the arch-angel Michael stood beside her.

“Tobincha” (sunbeam), she murmured, and closed her eyes again, as if overpowered by the vision.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE OLD WORLD.

The house of Basilio Murillo was closed, sealed with the seal of the Holy Office, which no temporal power in Spain dared break. The boldest brigand in the kingdom would have passed it by with averted eyes had the wealth of the Indies been scattered on its floors. Such was moral force, as represented by the church, in those days.

A soldier passing that way stopped and looked at the house. There was a dead silence about the place that told him it was vacant. He examined the windows and the door, and then he saw the seal, which he stooped over to inspect more closely, looking at it with curiosity, as if he had never seen the like of it before.

“The sons of Mars
Break bolts and bars,
But dare not crack
The seal of black.”

A voice addressing to him this bit of doggerel from behind gave him a little start, and quickly

straightening himself up, he turned to confront the speaker.

"Ho, mother!" he said, finding himself face to face with the gypsy, "is't thou?"

"'Tis not my ghost," replied the woman.

"Nay, though thou art not quite so plump as a pullet, one may perceive readily eno' thou art no ghost nor like to be one soon," said Rodrigo, laughing. "But canst tell me the meaning of this?" pointing to the door of the house.

"Ay, that can I. Where hast been this fortnight agone, an' thou knowest not that Basilio Murillo, the reconciled—Beneberak, the Jew—hath fallen into the clutches of the Holy Office? Said I not thou couldst ne'er make singing bird of a magpie by miscalling it?"

"Thou saidst it not to me; on that I'll be sworn," said the soldier.

"Nay, *amigo*, I said it not to thee, sooth, but I said it to him who bewrayed the old man."

"And who may he be that bewrayed him? But first tell me, an' thou knowst, what hath become of the *señorita*?"

"If thou wouldst know all that I can tell thee concerning this matter, thou must come with me elsewhere, for here is no place to stand chattering an' we covet not beds in the same inn that now entertaineth the Jew, and such beds be not to my liking."

"As thou wilt, *madre*."

"Come, then," said the gypsy, and when they had gone a little way, perceiving that her companion seemed ill at ease, she added, "Thou needst not walk beside me, man, an' thou be'st shamed to play the callant to the *gitana*, though thou mightst be caught in worse company, let me tell thee, *amigo*."

With this the soldier dropped behind the gypsy, and following her at a little distance to the river which they crossed by the pontoon bridge to Triana, a suburb lying on the opposite side, soon found himself in a dingy apartment, where an old woman, surrounded by several dirty, hungry children, was busy stirring with a long handled wooden spoon, an *olla podrida*—a mess not unlike the witches' famous stew in the variety of its ingredients—that boiled and bubbled in a big iron pot, sending up clouds of steam and an odor that whetted the appetite, in spite of the unattractive appearance of the place in which it was being concocted.

"*Vaya! brigand*," screeched the cook to an importunate youngster, "canst not wait till the fire hath done its work? Or wilt thou devour *me*, wolf that thou art?"

The boy said something to his little companions and laughed.

"Tough, am I?" cried the crone. "Take that for thine impudence, *bobo*," giving him a sharp

rap on the head with her spoon, "and know, had I not been tough I had not been here now to cook this mess for thy greedy belly. One must needs be tough in these times, an' one would not be a churchyard tenant ere one hath well had a blink o' this fine world. Hey, Felisa," to the gypsy, whose presence just then attracted her attention, "hast picked thee up a fine callant in the streets of Seville, I trow. Hath he the wherewithal to furnish the house and buy the provender?"

"Hush, *madre Zucia*," said Felisa, "methinks two score years should be a wall of defence to protect one from all such foolish jests. The man will go as he came somewhat the wiser perhaps for a few words that I would say to him."

"Ha, words are naught," said the old woman; "in at one ear, out at 'tother; if any stick, 'tis because they are like the pitch that defileth."

Felisa lighted an old, rusty, iron lamp, that made more smoke than light, and ushered Rodrigo into a chamber which was as dark as any underground dungeon.

"Sit thee down," she said, pushing a three-legged stool towards him, and putting the lamp on the floor, where it encircled itself with a dim halo, and casting a few feeble rays upward, touched the features of the man and woman, giving them a strange, weird look.

"Thou wouldst know what I can tell thee of

the Jew's granddaughter?" continued the gypsy, after sitting down on a stool similar to the one she had given the soldier.

"If thou wilt tell me where she is, and how I may come to have speech with her, 'tis all I ask of thee," was the reply.

"I can tell thee where she is, and how thou mayst come to have speech with her, of a surety, but before I do that I would know what interest thou hast in this *señorita*, for, certes, one may well marvel to see a man-at-arms—one who, I dare be sworn, hath made many a maid rue the day she saw him—a running after a lady of her degree, granddaughter of a Jew though she be."

"That there is naught in the matter to furnish food for gossip thou mightst well know, *amigo*," replied Rodrigo, "but to content thee, I will tell thee this: the *señor* Hernandez, to whom this lady is betrothed, did leave me, Rodrigo Sanchez, who oweth him a debt not to be accounted in the ordinary way, as a sort of guardian to her during his absence, and I tell thee honestly, I'd liefer lose my right hand than aught of evil should befall her."

"Why, then, did'st thou neglect thy duty?" asked Felisa.

"One's own flesh and blood hath claims," said the soldier apologetically, "and who was to divine that while I was absent scarce a score of days the old Jew was going to walk into that trap from which no man e'er cometh out unscorched?"

But what canst tell me? Let us not sit here bandying words to no purpose."

"Thou must know then," began the woman, "that Beneberak had for his scrivener a young spriggald——"

"I care not to hear aught about this spriggald," interrupted Rodrigo, impatiently, "'tis the Jew's granddaughter we are to discuss, not his scrivener."

"Dost always run ahead of thy comrades i' the fight?" asked the gypsy, sarcastically. "I trow not, what e'er thou mayst do on the retreat. But patience, *amigo*, I must tell my story in mine own way and we will come to the *doncella* anon."

"I crave thy pardon," said the soldier, "but patience as thou shouldst know, is a virtue we are not born to."

"True eno'," replied Felisa, "but thou art no chicken of yesterday's hatching, and shouldst have acquired it ere now. To begin again, then. This scrivener—Joses is his name—having an eye to the old man's riches, I doubt not, as well as the maiden's beauty, took it into his silly pate to be enamored of his master's granddaughter."

"The Jew dog!" muttered Rodrigo. "I will crop his ears for him an' I fall in with him."

"Keep thy threats for a more worthy foe," said Felisa, "and let me go on with my tale. I sold him philters with which to win his lady's love——"

“*Caramba!*” exclaimed the other, starting to his feet, “Didst thou aid and abet to cheat a noble cavalier of the love he had honestly won?”

“Fool!” said the woman, “thinkst thou mine own patience is of that quality which remaineth unmoved in despite of all provocation. Sit thee down and hear me to an end without another word from that ass’s mouth o’ thine, or else go about thy business.”

Rodrigo sat down again, curbing his temper as best he could, and Felisa continued.

“Ay,” she said, “I sold this lovesick youth a potion to steal the lady’s coy affections withal, sith she would not give them for the asking. And, marry, wherefore should I refuse the gold he was so anxious to part with? ’Tis not every-day i’ the year a Jew will open his purse to give one a *maravedi*, much less five bright gold ducats?”

“And did he give thee five gold ducats?”

“That did he, and thought he had a bargain. But, sooth, methinks the knave was mad, naught else; for it served him not, and the whole affair ended in his being told to pack. Then straightway went he to an old patron of his—a certain count who had borrowed much money of Bene-berak—and told him the old Jew practiced the religion of his fathers in secret, and so the count seeing an easy way to cancel the debt he owed, denounced him to the Holy Office, whereupon

he was taken, and taken in the very act; for he and some others were keeping the ancient feast of the Passover when the house was visited. Now mark what happened. The sagacious youth, Joses, thought when the girl was deprived of her natural protector she would gladly turn to him, and so as soon as he knew the old man was safely caged he hastened to offer his sympathy and services; but, lo, the house was closed, as thou didst find it."

"But the *señorita*," said Rodrigo, anxiously, "what became of her? I pray thee keep me no longer in suspense, but tell me her fate."

"Ay, so will I. A woman who claimed to be of her kindred, by the mother, who was a Castilian, you must know, came and took her away. But she was none of her kindred, only one sent by this same count, who had long had his eye on the maiden, and took this occasion to place her where he could besiege her under the mask of kinship, for as her cousin doth he make hot love to her."

"And this count of whom thou speakst—what name doth he bear?"

"Canst not guess!"

"Meanst thou the count Don Pedro Garcias?"

"Ay, the same—him whom thou didst erstwhile serve."

"Prithee, how didst thou learn all this?"

"The young Jew himself told me the part he

himself had played, for the rest I am indebted to mine own wit."

"And knoweth this young man who it was fore-stalled him?"

"Ay, I told him that myself."

"And didst tell him where the *señorita* Antonia is domiciled?"

"Nay, that kept I to myself, seeing there was no reason why he should know it. But I doubt not thou dost marvel why I brought thee into this dungeon. I had two reasons for it," and picking up the lamp she crossed the room holding it aloft so as to throw the light into a dark corner.

"Look," she said.

The soldier looked, and saw what appeared to be a bundle of rags. The rags began to stir, and a face, hollow-cheeked, haggard-eyed, was lifted from their midst. The eyes glared wildly, and the shrunken lips began to mutter and moan, when Felisa suddenly turned the light away and hurried the soldier out of the room.

"Thou hast seen," she said, a few minutes later, as they retraced their steps to the pontoon bridge, "what a woman may come to on whom Count Pedro casts an amorous eye. 'Twas for that I took thee into the place where we keep her in darkness—a light soon sets her raving—for that, and that we might talk without danger of being interrupted. She is my sister, younger than I am, and was once as beautiful as the

señorita Antonia. What is she now? A curse upon him! The curse of hell upon him! But I have set a jackal on his track, and, lion though he be, methinks he'll rue the day he robbed the jackal of his prey."

"What meanst thou?" asked Rodrigo.

"He is mad, like yon poor wench thou sawst but now."

"Who is mad, woman? Thou pratest as thou wert mad thyself."

"The Jew, 'tis of him I speak. He is but a fool, and love hath made him mad, and for the doing of a desperate deed none surpasseth your made fool. Ha! ha! an' this noble lord be not wary the mad fool Jew will send him to sleep with his fathers ere many days be sped."

* * * * *

Don Pedro Gerardo Alfonso Bernardo Mateo Garcias, conde del Monte-alto, sat in a chamber of his castle writing. This chamber was sparsely furnished. Besides the table at which he sat—a heavy affair, made of some dark wood, and having curiously carved legs—there were only a few straight-backed chairs and a Turkish lounge, or ottoman, the latter a luxury imported from the senuous East. On the marble floor were two large rugs, one under the writer's feet, the other in front of the ottoman—these likewise were importations from the Orient, and the walls were bare, save for a few old pieces of rusty armor, several ancient swords and poniards, a couple of

Moorish cimeters, presumably captured in war by some former count of Monte-alto, which hung upon them without any regard to orderly arrangement.

What was Don Pedro writing? Since the reign of Isabella, friend of Columbus, patron of science, art and letters, Spanish nobles had not been content to make their marks, in lieu of writing their multipartite names to such documents as required their signatures. Not only did they learn to write their names, but they dabbled quite extensively in *belles-lettres*, inditing essays and courting the muses; and Don Pedro was composing a sonnet.

The count of Monte-alto was a man past middle life, still handsome, but not with the same kind of beauty for which he had been noted in his youth. He had once been a tall, slim young cavalier, with flashing black eyes, a silky moustache and an abundance of dark curling hair. Now he was a tall stout knight, with a heavy beard, slightly streaked with grey, and the curling locks had deserted the top of the well shaped head, leaving it bare. The black eyes had lost their fiery brillianc, but there was still a smouldering spark in them that blazed up occasionally, and there were sensual wrinkles around them, the animal passions that had dominated a life of some length having left their mark there as elsewhere on a face that would otherwise have been very noble.

Such was the man who now sat writing a sonnet, the self-satisfied smile on his voluptuous lips hovering over the words, among which extravagant Spanish adjectives, the grandies of the languages, asserted their polysyllabic consequence at every turn, like a bird hovering over its nest of eggs.

Having finished his verses, Don Pedro held the paper at arm's length and read them over aloud, then made a fair copy which he folded and addressed,

"For

"The most Beautiful and Gracious *señorita* Antonia Murillo"—tying it with a bit of floss silk, of which material, much used in epistolary correspondence in those days, he had a supply in a large portfolio that lay on the table.

Evidently well pleased with his performance, and holding it lightly in his hand, he arose and went to the great mullioned window that lighted the apartment.

Looking out of this window the count saw orange and olive groves and vineyards palpitating in the warm embrace of the fructifying sun. There were a few houses in sight, some far away where the silver band of the Guadalquivir gleamed narrowing among the distant hazy hills, others close at hand. On one of these latter a little cottage, almost hidden in a growth of oaks and ilexes, he fixed his eyes with an eager, earnest gaze.

"Ah, she is there," he murmured, catching a glimpse of something moving in the shadows of the trees to the rear of the house. Then he heard the barking of a dog.

"Curse the brute," he said; "it must be disposed of! A woman in love with a dog hath ne'er a thought for a man. Ha! there was a purpose in its bark."

This exclamation was elicited by the sight of a man and woman walking near the outside face of the wall that enclosed the grounds surrounding the house.

"By the sword of Gonsalvo! I know the pair. 'Tis Felisa, the gitana, and the soldier, Rodrigo. What can a man-at-arms and a gypsy have in common? Some roguery, I'll be sworn. I will have them taken in charge and nip their plot in the bud," and Count Pedro turned away.

Had he stood at the window a little longer he would have seen the two retrace their steps, and in a few minutes part company. The soldier went off towards the city, but his companion sought a little postern in the wall, and, finding it unbolted, entered the enclosure where the dog was still barking. The count had taken two or three steps away from the window when the door of the apartment opened, and the young Jew, Joses, entered, closing it behind him.

"Ha!" said the nobleman, "what meaneth this intrusion, knave? How didst thou gain admittance to my private apartment?"

"I crave your *señoria's* pardon," said Joses, humbly.

"Well, what wilt thou?" asked Don Pedro, impatiently, seeing that he hesitated, "Art not content with the price paid thee for betraying thy master? Judas received not so much for betraying his Lord."

"'Tis not the gold, *señor*," replied the young man; "in proof of which I have brought it back to you," laying a purse on the table.

"What then? Speak, fool!"

"Beneberak-Basilio Murillo had a granddaughter." The speaker was very pale, his voice hoarse and trembling with suppressed emotion.

"What is Basilio Murillo's granddaughter to thee?" asked the count haughtily.

"Much, *señor*—more than all else this world holds. I love her!"

"Thou, dog?" and the speaker lifted his hand threateningly, but lowered it immediately with a scornful gesture, and broke into a laugh.

"Ay, *señor*," said the Jew, "I love her, and I have been told your *señoria* hath hidden her away."

"And if I have—what then? Hast thou come to beard the lion in his den? To snatch his prey from him?"

Had Count Pedro known aught of human nature he would have been on his guard. The man before him had been pale when he entered the room, but now he was the color of a dead

man, his lips were blue, and there was a hard, dogged look in his eyes which, to one less blinded by scorn, would have betrayed the savage purpose of the desperate soul that looked out of them.

But nothing was further from the thoughts of the nobility of that day than that one of the unfortunates whom they trampled on without compunction, daily and hourly, would turn and with one resolute blow wipe out a lifetime's wrongs, and the Count of Monte-Alto went on, mockingly, "Thou lovest the *señorita* Antonia," he said, "but though thou art a comely youth, I doubt me if she loveth thee. She hath more of the spirit of Castile than of Judea in her, and would scorn to mate with one of thy race. But possess thee in patience, poor dog; ere many months are sped I warrant she'll come to thee gladly. Now begone and be content that I have not thrown thee out of the window."

The Jew stood looking at him a moment, and then with a sudden bound threw himself upon him. Count Pedro was taken completely by surprise, and before he could recover himself his assailant had driven a knife deep into his throat. He fell heavily to the floor and lay there on his back, his arms outstretched, his eyes staring wildly up at the ceiling, his mouth opening and shutting with a gasping, gurgling sound. The assassin stood looking at his victim a moment; then, leaving the knife sticking in the throat,

softly went out. And the man lying there dying on the floor, whose eyes, fast growing dim, followed his retreating form, was the last who ever saw him.

* * * * *

Late in the afternoon of that same day Rodrigo Sanchez gave a tremendous rap on the gate leading into the enclosure in front of the little cottage already mentioned, and a few minutes later the gate was opened by Antonia, who was accompanied by her dog, and a maid bearing a small portmanteau.

"Ah, my good Rodrigo," she said, "I rejoice to see thee."

"And glad am I to have found your *señoria*," replied the soldier. "For this we have to thank the gitana. Little did I think e'er to be under such a load of debt to one of her kind, but we know not to-day who may serve us to-morrow; wherefore have I ever held that a surly way is bad coin for every day use. A civil word, say I, though it had naught else to recommend it, hath the virtue of cheapness."

"Thou say'st truly, Rodrigo. But let us be going, *amigo*. Sith, the good gitana told me to whom I have been indebted for the shelter of yonder roof, time hath lagged, while I awaited thy coming, until the minutes have seemed to grow into hours. *Adios, Juanita*," to the maid, from whom Rodrigo had taken the portman-

teau. "Find thee a more suitable home, doncella; 'tis ill for thee to be in this place."

"Ah, *señorita*, if I could but go with you," said the girl.

"That may not be, child," was the reply. "Like the dear Lord, I have not where to lay my head, and what would I do with thee?"

The sad tone in which these words were spoken brought a sympathetic look into the maid's eyes, and, with a tearful "adios," she turned away, while the soldier, shouldering his burden, marched off with his charge, the dog running on ahead.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE OLD WORLD AND THE NEW.

Near the Bay of Cadiz, opposite the city of that name, stood a little farm house, attached to which were a few acres of arable land. The house was built of stones of irregular sizes and shapes, and stood in the midst of a grove of orange and lemon trees. The air was sweet with the perfume of their blooms, and the ground beneath the trees was white with the cast petals, of which there was a constant shower, like a light, continuous fall of snow.

In the front room of the house sat an old woman spinning, while she listened to the sound of clashing swords, accompanied by the monotonous chant of a man's voice that came from another room, on the door of which a dog of the spaniel breed, lying at the old woman's feet, kept a watchful, anxious eye.

"One, two; right guard, left; front, point," said the voice, keeping time with the clang, clang, clang of the weapons.

The dog got up and ran whining to the door of the room whence came these sounds.

"Back, Carlos," said the old woman; "lie down,

good dog; Rodrigo will ne'er do hurt to thy young master, so rest thee in peace."

But the dog was not satisfied, and kept running to the door, scratching on it and looking down at the crack underneath it with his ears pricked, as dogs will do, while the voice of the man continued its chant in unison with the clang of the swords, "One, two; one, two (clang, clang; clang, clang); right, left, point."

And the old woman continued her spinning, the breeze from the sea coming in at the window to play with her white hair and the white wool on her distaff; and so the arts of peace and war went on side by side.

For some time this was kept up, much to the discomfort of the dog, and then the same voice that had been counting cried out, as the clash of swords suddenly ceased:

"Well done, your *señoria*; 'twas a fair hit—that none can gainsay."

A few minutes later the door that the dog had been watching opened, and Rodrigo entered the room, followed by a young, beardless cavalier.

"Ha, *madre*," said the soldier, "thou seest his *señoria* is learning apace; he will know the art of fence anon as well as his instructor."

"It rejoiceth me to hear it," cried the old woman, "sith he must needs follow in the footsteps of such an addle-pate as thou; but I see no reason why he should go off on any such wild tramp as thou proposest at all, and 'tis shame to

thee to lead a youth like him into such perils as he will surely encounter in yonder new countries. Why, he hath not the shadow of a beard yet."

"Ne'er trouble thyself about the beard, mother," said Rodrigo, laughing.

"And have no tremors on our account, good Dame Sanchez," said the youth, blushing. "I doubt not thou shalt see us back safe in Spain again ere a score of months are come and gone. We but go in search of a truant—an elder brother of mine"—blushing again—"though should any adventures fall in our way, we shall not avoid them, because there may chance to be a zest of peril in them."

"Ay, there it is," said Dame Sanchez; "ever ready to run into danger, when 'twould seem the wisest course to keep out of its way."

"Ho, *madre!*" cried Rodrigo: "what new religion is this thou preachest? Would you believe it, *señor*, she is ever berating me for being naught better than a man-at-arms, as if 'twere the easiest thing i' the world to climb to the topmost rung o' the ladder an' one only have a sword in his hand."

"And what's to hinder a brave man grasping the highest reward offered for brave deeds, pri-thee?" asked the mother, suddenly changing her tune.

"Other brave men more favored by fortune," replied the son.

"Tut, tut, thou shouldst have been a priest, boy."

"And so I would have been, had it been left to thee and Father Bernabe, but, i' faith, I slipped through the fingers of both."

"And how much the better art thou to-day for it?"

"Little eno', save that I have had mine own way, and that is something. But, as the proverb hath it, 'Change of pasture maketh fat calves,' and having tried the old world without advantage to myself, I will e'en try the new one for better luck."

"Try what thou wilt on thine own behalf, boy," said the dame, "but let Don Antonio remain in Spain; he hath not your years and experience —such as it is—and will scarce bear unscathed the hardships thou art tempting him to. And your little dog, *señor*," turning to the youth, about whose welfare she was so solicitous, "it is so troubled when'er you have a bout with the swords: I'm sure it will die when you are gone."

"Ah, poor Carlos," said Don Antonio, looking down affectionately at the little animal that had never ceased to evince its joy since the clashing of the swords had come to an end.

"Poor Carlos, the fates decree that we must part, but I know I leave thee in good hands, for that Dame Sanchez will love thee I doubt not."

"Of a surety will I," said Dame Sanchez.

"Dear little doggy," said the youth, stooping to pet Carlos on the head, "thou didst see a bout with swords once—a bout in real earnest—in which thou wert somewhat concerned thyself, and therefore art thou troubled when thou hearest the clangor of battle, even though it be mimic battle, for thou know'st not the difference."

"A real bout, did you say, *señor*?"

"Ay, and a beautiful fight it was, but soon over."

"Ah! tell me about it," pleaded the old woman, her eyes brightening; "'tis a pleasure in these dull times to hear tell of honest blows delivered with downright good will."

"An' your *señoria* begin prating of battle and the like," said Rodrigo, "the good mother will keep your tongue wagging by the hour."

"Sith my story is a short one," said Don Antonio, "I will tell it, I trow. Thou seest, *madre*, there were two rogues——"

"Two rogues, *señor*?"

"Ay, two rogues said I, who lay in wait to entrap a poor, little partridge."

"A partridge, your *señoria*?"

"Ay, a partridge said I—a silly wench, I mean——"

"Ah!"

"Who knew no better than to be running about i' the woods alone. And they would have carried her off—God knoweth where—had not a noble cavalier come to the rescue just i' the nick o' time, and set upon them with such good will that the rogues were fain to relinquish their prey, and leave it to—ah! thou shouldst have seen this cavalier, dame; the noblest he that eye of woman e'er looked on in this poor world of ours."

"I doubt it not, I doubt it not," cried the old woman, excitedly; "methinks I see him now, laying on with might and main, the rogues giving ground, then flying. Ah, a noble cavalier indeed—but was your *señoria* there?"

"Ah—nay, dame—not in my present presence," said the youth, with embarrassment and heightening color, "I heard tell of it from one who saw it."

"But the dog—of a surety you said the dog was there."

"Aye, and took part i' the fray—Brave Carlos!" toying with the dog's ears.

"Then the dog—"

"*Basta, madre mia!*" cried Rodrigo; "weary not the *señor* Antonio with so much questioning. Thou hast heard all there is to tell, and let that suffice thee."

* * * * *

Nanatonah, who had already begun to mend before Don Julio Hernandez visited her, when removed to better quarters, with the surgeon and

Father Lorenzo, the priest, to look after her well-being, improved so rapidly that she was soon out and about the camp, though she walked with a halt in her gait.

She made no effort to escape to the woods, and when Don Julio proposed that she go back to her people, hoping through her to re-establish peaceful relations with them, she fell on her knees at his feet and, putting his hand on the top of her head, said, "Nanatonah is Tobincha's slave—she will obey him, but when she leaveth him she goeth out into the darkness of night."

So she went, sorrowfully enough, loaded with presents for the chiefs and their wives, and what with these and her marvelous tales of the beautiful god-man, as she called the cavalier, accomplished her mission, coming back accompanied by an embassy of warriors, which met with a very different reception from that which had been accorded the one that had waited on Rossi.

Once more the camp was enlivened by the presence of the aborigines, who brought gifts of game and maize, and such wild fruits as the woods afforded. Some of them brought beautiful peltry and dressed hides for "the good white chief," as they learned to call Don Julio; and from this he conceived the idea of carrying a cargo of these things back to Spain.

In the meantime the caravel had been overhauled and prepared for a voyage to Vera Cruz,

whither he intended to send all who desired to go; for he had become aware that a few of the old garrison—led by Rossi and Gonzales—were dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs.

The vessel was ready to sail, only waiting for a supply of fresh water to be put aboard, when one of the sailors, who had climbed up in the lookout to see if the boat that had gone up the river to procure it, was in sight, came hastily down to report two ships under full press of sail outside the island—the one apparently chasing the other.

“Canst tell to what nations they belong?” asked the *señor* Hernandez.

“Methinks the one that is being chased is a Spanish galleon, *señor*,” replied the sailor.

“Then must we go to her rescue,” said Don Julio. “Come, let us hasten aboard ‘La Esperanza’ or our countrymen will be the captives of some freebooter. Get our trustiest men together quickly and marshal them on the beach,” to a young soldier who served under him as lieutenant.

One of the caravel’s boats, as already intimated, had gone up the river to get the supply of water needful for the proposed voyage to Vera Cruz, but with the other, and the old one belonging to the wrecked galleon, which, though somewhat leaky, was still serviceable, the soldiers required for the expedition were soon em-

barked, when the anchor was lifted and the sail set.

Nanatonah, seldom out of sight of Don Julio, whom she regarded with a reverential love, had seen with concern these preparations for departure, and she now stood on the beach, looking after the receding ship with aching heart and tearful eyes. She thought her hero—her god had gone from her forever.

She had withdrawn from the little crowd that had gathered to witness the departure of the expedition, and was alone, but in a few minutes Rossi stood beside her. She knew he was there—she felt his presence, as one instinctively feels the presence of something evil, but she did not look around, nor seem to heed him in any way.

“Thou hast given him what thou didst deny to me,” he said; “but to him thou are naught. He careth not for thee, and I did love thee. Ah God! I hate him, and will be avenged. Dost hear? An’ he put foot on these sands again he shall die, and his blood be upon thy head!”

He leaned over so that his lips came close to her ear, speaking between his teeth, as though he feared, should he open his mouth, he would shout his words with all the vehemence that he felt them, pointing, with shaking hand, to the caravel.

“Dost hear?” he repeated; but she made no sign, and, with a muttered curse, he left her.

The vessel was half way across the sound

when the booming of cannon was heard coming from the other side of the island.

A Spanish galleon, the "Buena Ventura," of Cadiz, in trying to escape from one of those English sea-rovers so plentiful on the high seas at that time, whose captains held commissions issued by authority of England's sovereign, but were no better than pirates—thieves, who were knighted for their success in the science of stealing—had run to the northward until sighting this unknown coast and finding her passage barred in that direction, she came about on a westerly tack, her commander trusting, should he find it impossible to escape, to slip into some inlet and put his people ashore, when it was his intention to burn his ship rather than she should become the prize of the foe that the Spaniard hated above all others on the face of the earth.

The two ships were of nearly equal speed, but the distance between them had gradually diminished, and unless some accident should disable the pursuer it was very evident she would eventually overtake the pursued.

Among those standing on the deck of the "Buena Ventura" was a short, heavily built man-at-arms and a slim, beardless youth.

"Think'st thou yon corsair will overtake us, Rodrigo?" asked the youth.

"It looketh that way now, *señor*," replied Rodrigo. "The captain saith if he can keep her at a safe distance till the nightfall we may escape,

but, were I he, I'd ne'er turn tail and run like a dog at sight of an enemy."

"What wouldst thou do, then?"

"Do, your *señoria!* Why, sooth, I'd stand up like a man and fight for my own. But your trader is ever afraid of getting a hole in his skin, so he either runneth away or giveth up all he hath to the first rogue who demandeth his purse. There! she is sending a shot after us," as the first wreath of white smoke appeared on the bow of the stranger, followed almost immediately by the report of the gun; "but she is too far away yet."

The Englishman, however, did not seem to think so, for he continued at short intervals to throw shot from his bow chaser, each one of which came nearer and nearer the mark.

"*Caramba!*" exclaimed the soldier, "he will reach us ere long an' we do not make better use of our heels, which, I fear me, we cannot. But what is our captain doing?" as the galleon coming about gave a lurch that made him stagger. "Ah!" turning to look ahead, "he is entering this strait, and he knoweth naught as to whither it leadeth. *Santa Maria!* he may find himself in what the Frenchman calleth a *cul-de-sac*, and then must he fight or surrender, for he can fly no further."

The galleon had a gun mounted on her poop, and the Spanish captain now began to return the fire of his pursuers.

“*Buenos!*” cried Rodrigo, “he’s a dog of some metal, after all. Methought he was going to let yon rogue do all the barking. Ha! well aimed, my chicken. Did the piece carry somewhat further, we might cripple him.”

And so the chase continued into the sound—without damage on either side for some time—those engaged in the contest being so busy with each other that the approach of a caravel, rapidly overhauling them, was unnoticed.

But the Englishman gradually gained on the Spaniard until his shot began to fall in dangerous proximity.

“*Caramba!*” cried Rodrigo, “the guns of those heretics always carry better than ours, and I fear me we shall have our wings clipped ere we go much further.”

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when a shot struck the mizzenmast of the galleon, which fell over the side of the vessel, dragging in the water by the shrouds; and before the wreckage could be cleared away the enemy was alongside.

But the Spanish captain had no idea of tamely giving up his ship. His blood was up, and, calling on the soldiers and sailors to stand by him, he met the English, sword in hand, as they came swarming over the bulwarks.

Blows and battle-cries—“Saint George for England!” “Saint Iago for Spain”—now sounded

on every side, and to these were added the voices of several priests, who, standing in the *melee*, called loudly on the saints.

Rodrigo and Don Antonio stood near each other engaged in combat with two burly sailors, when a tall young Saxon, blue-eyed, with a profusion of yellow curls flowing over his shoulders, pushed the latter's antagonist aside and took his place. Crossing swords with the young Spaniard, and standing thus on guard, he addressed him in his own language.

"You are somewhat weary, *señor*," he said; "will you rest a little ere we have a bout?"

"Nay, nay," cried the youth, flushed with excitement; "come on! come on! Saint Iago for Spain!"

"Saint George for England, then!" said the other, and they began to fight.

The affair might have ended badly for the Spaniard, who was no match for his foe, had not an accident turned the tide in his favor. Rodrigo, hotly pressing the man who had engaged him, drove him against the other with such force as to throw him off his guard, and at that moment Don Antonio, making a lunge, his sword passed under the arm of his antagonist and went through his body, the point striking the back-piece of his cuirass. Even this would not have happened had not the Englishman, losing his balance, been thrown forward on the point of the weapon.

And now was seen a strange revulsion of feeling in the young cavalier, whose prowess thus far had won the admiration of friend and foe alike.

The wounded man fell heavily to the deck, and the other looked at the bloody weapon he held in his hand with horror.

“*O Dios!*” he cried, throwing it from him and going down on his knees beside his fallen foe, “what have I done! *Santa Maria mia!* How his blood floweth apace. Rodrigo! Rodrigo! come hither, *amigo*, and help me stay it, ere his life ebb away,” and, tearing a scarf from his own shoulders, he tried to bind it about the wound, tears flowing from his eyes like rain.

The combatants in that immediate neighborhood had ceased fighting to look and marvel at what they saw, when there came a cry of alarm from the English ship, followed by a crash, as the caravel came alongside, and a fresh band of Spaniards—led by one who looked the impersonation of the young god of war—leaped over the bulwarks, with flashing blades making their way to the deck of the galleon.

The English fought stubbornly, many preferring rather to die than surrender, but the odds against them were too great, and it was not long ere all of them who were not dead were prisoners.

The young cavalier who had led the rescuing party, seeking the captain of the galleon, came

upon Rodrigo and Don Antonio standing over the prostrate form of the fair-haired young Saxon. He started with surprise when he recognized the man-at-arms.

"Rodrigo!" he exclaimed; "is it thou, man?"

"Ay, *señor*," replied Rodrigo, "'tis I, sure enough; and thankful am I that it hath pleased fate to lead us into this trap sith here we find that we were seeking."

"What meanest thou?"

"Why, just this—look up, your *señoria*," to his young companion, who kept his eyes fixed on the deck—"this young *caballero* and I sailed from Cadiz, conceiving 'twere an easy matter to find one we sought in this new world; for, you must know, *señor*, we were simple enough to think we had but to ask for this one or that one, and straightway be told he is here or he is there."

"But why didst thou leave Seville, Rodrigo?" asked Don Julio. "Surely, thou hast not left thy charge without good reason."

"There have been some mishaps since your departure from that same city, *señor*," replied the soldier.

"Mishaps?" repeated the cavalier, anxiously. "Speak on, man; an' thou art the bearer of evil tidings what availeth this dallying?"

"Look up, your *señoria*," said Rodrigo again to the youth standing beside him, "look up."

"O, my lord!" cried Don Antonio, lifting his eyes and holding out his hands toward Don

Julio, who now looked at him for the first time, "dost thou not know me?"

"Antonia, *muy amata!*" cried the *señor* Hernandez, opening wide his arms to receive her into them, "thou here, too?"

"Where else should she be and your *señoria* and Rodrigo Sanchez here?" said Rodrigo.

"And the old man: what of him?"

The soldier pointed significantly to Antonia, who lay weeping in the cavalier's arms.

"He hath suffered," she murmured, having heard the question.

"Then will he suffer no more," said Don Julio; "so dry thy tears, love."

"'Tis long sith I have shed a tear for him," she replied; "for though my heart doth bleed whene'er I think of him, of what avail are tears? But look, my lord," starting up from his arms, and pointing to the man stretched at their feet, "see there, what I have done with mine own hand."

"Thou, Antonia? Did thy weak hand lay that tall fellow low?"

"That did it," said Rodrigo, before Antonia could reply, "and though the *señorita* doth grieve at her own handiwork, beshrew me, but I think she hath done the state most excellent service, for that same knave was captain of yon band of rogues."

"For shame, Rodrigo!" said Antonia. "How canst thou speak so? One would think thee hard of heart."

"But Rodrigo is right, Antonia," said Don Julio.

"Right I am," said Rodrigo, "and hard of heart I am to boot for such freebooters as he. My heart, which is bread to the honest and weak, is a stone to all scurvy rogues—ay, a very flint stone."

The cavalier laughed. "Hast had some instruction in Holy Writ, methinks, Rodrigo," he said.

"Ay, sooth, *señor*," replied the soldier. "Father Bernabe took care of that. He would have made a priest of me, but I left him snoring in his bed one moonlight night; and when he set eyes on me again I was no longer a cockerel, and he was too old a capon to cut my comb for me."

While the deck was being cleared, the dead consigned to the deep, the wounded distributed among the several ships, Antonia retired to the cabin of the galleon, reappearing in time attired in the vesture of a Spanish lady, a change that scarcely attracted notice, there being several females aboard, who had been shut up in the cabin during the progress of the fight. She bore a burden of some weight in her hands which she cast into the sea. "There," she said, "sink out of my sight. Never more will Antonia case herself in steel, and God asoil her soul that she did ever so affront her body! Distaff and spindle for her were fitter tools than sword and dudgeon."

When the three ships arrived at the anchorage opposite the camp, night had already set in, but the *commandante*, getting into a boat, went ashore, accompanied by Rodrigo and Antonia, and as they stepped on the beach they looked upon a scene strange to the eyes of the latter. An assemblage of steel-clad soldiers and half-naked savages, some of whom carried flaring torches, came down the slope to meet them.

Scarcely, however, had these had time to welcome their commander, looking wonderingly at his fair companion, when there was some commotion in the rear of the group, and Gonzales, followed by several of the old garrison, pushed his way to the front, dragging Nawatonah with him. Throwing a tomahawk on the sand at Don Julio's feet, he said, "Look, *señor*, and say what shall be done with the murderer."

"Murderess," repeated the cavalier; "what meanest thou?"

"That this woman hath murdered *el señor* Rossi—naught else."

"This girl?"

"Girl, an't please you, *señor*, but, of a truth, devil in girl's skin."

"What hast thou to say in thine own justification, Nawatonah?" asked Don Julio, turning to the Indian.

"He was Tobincha's enemy, and Nawatonah slew him," was the simple reply.

"Thou dost admit thy guilt then?"

"Nawatonah cannot lie to Tobincha."

The cavalier looked troubled. "We will inquire into this matter further to-morrow," he said; "meanwhile set a watch over her, but use her not harshly."

"And surely," said Antonia, "her bonds may be loosed"—the captives arms were bound with cords unnecessarily tight, it seemed: "see how her poor arms are cut and swollen."

The Indian turned to the direction whence came this voice so full of sweet sympathy, and for the first time her eyes rested on the magnificent beauty of the white woman. The vision, for such it was to her—startled her out of her composure, and, gazing like one dazed, bewildered, she scarcely seemed aware that her arms were being unbound until she found them free, when, lifting them with painful difficulty, she stretched them above her head. Perhaps this was done in an effort to relieve them of the numb, dead feeling produced by the ligatures that had so long confined them; perhaps to invoke the aid of the Great Spirit, so much needed in this, the hour of her extremity. When they dropped to her side again she sped away like an arrow on its errand of death, with the sinuous movements of the serpent, eluding them who would have stayed her, and disappearing in the darkness.

Flashes of phosphorescent light marked her course through the water as she fled out into the

sound, her voice rising on the night breeze, chanting the death song of her people—at first clear and distinct, but gradually growing fainter and fainter, until at last it was merged in the misereries that the sea ever chants over its dead.

THE END.

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